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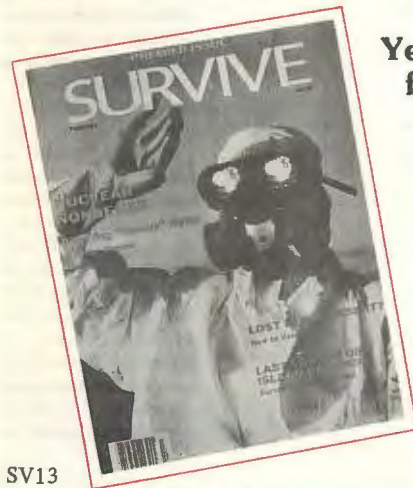
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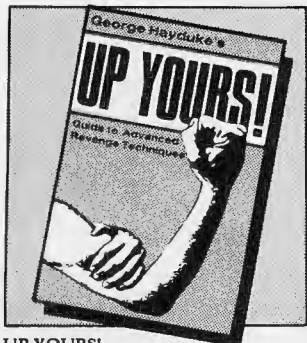


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Because many of the author's suggestions may be illegal, the publisher offers this volume for entertainment purposes only!

5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, 220 pp. ISBN 0-87364-249-X

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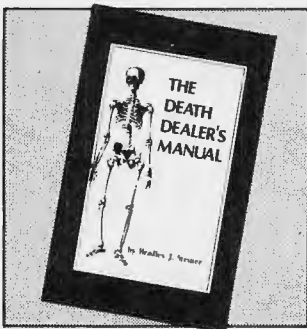
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by Bradley Steiner
Killers-for-hire walk the streets around us, every day. They may be mob hitmen, refugees from "The Farm," KGB executioners, or other government specialists. These human killing machines do their jobs with deadly efficiency, without an ounce of remorse.

The Death Dealer's Manual tells the true story of how these professional killers go about doing their ugly business. Author Bradley Steiner is known as one of America's top martial combat writers. He was able to penetrate the inner sanctums of the world's busiest assassination bureaus in compiling this terrifying guide to death-for-sale. Secret skills in the black art of assassination are divulged to the civilian reader—no holds barred. Numerous illustrations detail these termination techniques. Of special interest is a complete *Dim Mak anatomy chart* with time reference guide, published here in English for the first time!

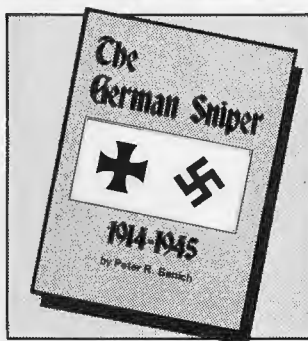
Contents include: vital points, edged weapons, handguns, unarmed killing techniques, improvised weapon kills, use of the garrote and crossbow, synthetic and natural poisons, Dim Mak—Chinese death touch, and attributes of the professional assassin. **Warning: for informational purposes only!** 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, illus., 112 pp. ISBN 0-87364-247-3

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THE GERMAN SNIPER 1914-1945

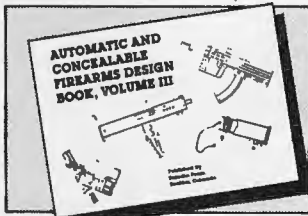
by Peter R. Senich
The complete story of a most significant era in modern small arms development. No other book on German military sniping compares with the quality of Peter Senich's *The German Sniper 1914-1945*. Beginning with the Great War, Senich traces the evolution of the Mauser 98's initial adaptation to long-range sniping mode, including the special accurization measures and early development optical sights that were keystones for these adaptations.

Through the first stages of WWII, the most notable period in this weapon's development, Nazi armourers concentrated on adapting the venerable Mauser Karabiner 98K to the new advanced optical sights manufactured by Zeiss, Goetz and others. These sighting devices were without peer, and provided the German Army, particularly the specially trained "Scharfschützen" (sharpshooters), with a decided edge.

Over 600 exceptional photographs detail every facet of these weapon systems, and the men who used them. Senich explores other noteworthy aspects of Nazi sniping history—the experimental role played by the Selbstladegewehr 41 and 43 selective fire assault rifles, and a separate chapter of interviews with WWII Germany's top three master snipers. *The German Sniper 1914-1945* also includes definitive proof mark identification information for all relevant sniping rifles, mounts, optical sights, and accessories.

Serious German historians and weapons experts simply must have this book! 8 1/2 x 11, clothbound, 660 photographs, 468 pages. ISBN 0-87364-223-6

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Also included in this volume are selective-fire conversion plans for the **Browning Hi-Power pistol**. Hobbyist machinists, gunsmiths, and firearms curious buffs will get a real bang out of this one. Order now! 9 x 12, softcover, machinist's drawings, 64 pp. ISBN 0-87364-224-4

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by Dr. Jekel
The title says it all! Here's the hottest item in the book world today. *The Perfect Crime and How to Commit It* reveals tales of unsolved crimes and dispels the myth that crime doesn't pay. Arsonists, shoplifters, jewel thieves, cat burglars, murderers, ace detectives, and top criminals contributed (some unwittingly) to make *The Perfect Crime* a startling expose of crime and criminals.

With less than 21 percent of all reported crimes solved, Dr. Jekel had a wealth of material at her disposal. She spent two years investigating and interviewing experts on both sides of the law. Jekel takes a hard look at America's loophole-ridden judicial system, which creates "successful criminals out of many hopelessly inept bunglers." *The Perfect Crime* is filled with information on the technical advancements of modern police laboratories, "a major hazard for successful criminals." Nowadays, an experienced detective can take fingerprints from inside a rubber glove, or identify a criminal's sex and blood type from a single hair.

In consecutive chapters, Dr. Jekel dissects and analyzes perfect crimes of theft, fraud, forgery, arson, shoplifting, and of course—murder. *The Perfect Crime and How to Commit It* is sure to thrill crime fans, mystery lovers, and adventurers. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, 208 pp. ISBN 0-87364-237-6

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SECRETS OF THE NINJA

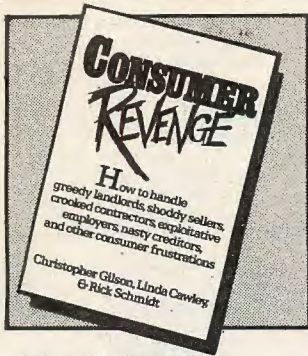
by Ashida Kim
Are Ninja the ultimate warriors? Read the *Secrets of the Ninja* and discover why this 2,000-year-old sect of silent stalkers has made headlines in the Western world after centuries of claiming horrified respect in the Orient. The Ninja were called Wizards of Invisibility. Certainly, at the height of their art, they were absolutely unseeable. And now, Paladin unveils the deepest, darkest secrets of those ancient assassins. Learn how you, too, can enter rooms unseen, climb vertical walls, and scout unknown territory in ways even more stealthy than the original Indians ever used.

A practicing Ninja himself, author Ashida Kim offers excellent instruction in the Silent Way. Step-by-step, prodigiously photo-illustrated chapters cover meditation methods, principles of light and shadow, escapes from holds, fighting multiple adversaries, *Inpo* (The Art of Hiding), *Pa Pu* (Night Walking Ability), and many other *Secrets of the Ninja*. The Ninjitsu approach is not always empty-handed—here's how the grappling hook, *Ninja-To* (sword), rope and other devices can work to a Ninja's advantage. Understand what it means to operate the Silent Way and gain unique insight into this shrouded realm of martial arts.

Over two years in the making, this beautifully designed collector's volume is, without doubt, the finest Ninja training work ever published. Do not confuse *Secrets of the Ninja* with any other book on the subject. With over 200 vivid action photographs, 16 chapters, and 168 big pages, this book far outstrips any attempted imitation. This is the real thing! 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, drawings, 200 photos. 168 pp. ISBN 0-87364-234-1

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CONSUMER REVENGE
by Christopher Gilson, Linda Cawley, & Rick Schmidt

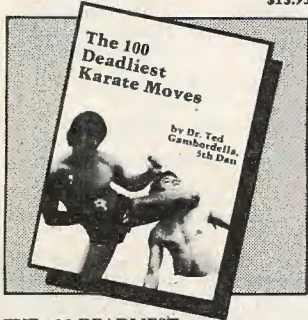
Looking for new revenge ideas? *Consumer Revenge* is the everyday consumer's guide for getting even! This all-new handbook gives workable ideas for taking vengeance on "greedy landlords, shoddy sellers, crooked contractors, exploitative employers, nasty creditors," and other consumer foes.

A "Revenge Kit" at the end of every chapter makes it easy. Just follow the step-by-step instructions, complete with sample letters, and other methods of taking revenge on society's consumer institutions and government bureaucracies.

Learn how to gain the personal satisfaction of winning the battle against automobile manufacturers, restaurants, banks, credit institutions, contractors, insurance brokers, and moving companies.

Additional chapters include: Arrest; Avenging and Burying a Police Record; Driving Violations: Keeping Yourself in the Driver's Seat; and Burglars, Thieves, and Muggers: Do Unto Them As They Do Unto You. An appendix lists direct phone numbers of industry arbitration sources. Every consumer should have this useful, practical guide to fighting back!

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THE 100 DEADLIEST KARATE MOVES

by Dr. Ted Gambordella

Discover the 100 most lethal kicks, shotos, and blows perfected by the world's greatest karate masters. No flowery katas. Only hard-hitting, practical karate techniques that could save your life! In *The 100 Deadliest Karate Moves*, Dr. Ted Gambordella, a 5th degree black belt, teaches you how to fight to the death, if need be. Over 100 dramatic photos show exactly which vital points to attack to cripple or kill your opponent.

This book is not for dojo ballerinas; it is for men who take their fighting art seriously. Just a sample of the deadly moves covered are: snap kicks, heel kicks, vital points of the head and chest, shotos, palm heels, ridge hands, and many more! A special chapter on street fighting with karate makes this a super selection for any self-defense specialist. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, over 100 photos, 88 pp. ISBN 0-87364-245-7

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U.S. ARMY SURVIVAL MANUAL

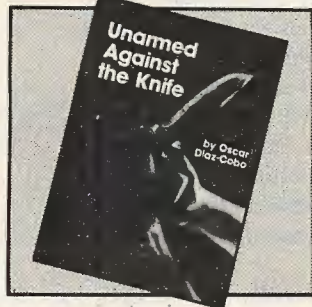
When the U.S. Army puts together a general survival manual, they do it right. The fighting men who created this title were battlefield vets, not armchair experts. They survived through the hells of Tarawa, Normandy, the Yalu, and Nam.

This exact reproduction of U.S. Army manual FM 21-76 teaches development of survival skills in any terrain, from arctic or desert to jungle and ocean environments. Map reading and navigation, scouting and patrolling, camouflage, woodcraft, first aid, and outdoor improvisation techniques form the foundation of this survival program. Complete with many charts, diagrams, and illustrations.

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Obtained from a member of the Rhodesian Special Air Service Squadron, this scarce combat manual is now available to Paladin readers for the first time. The Rhodesian military forces were long regarded as one of the world's finest. This is the principal guide used to conduct the enormously successful operations—counter guerrilla ops, air ops, ambushing, and notable attacks on terrorist base camps—during the Rhodesian antiterrorist war. Contents include: Standard Security Terminology and Abbreviations, Communication, Rural Operations, Ambushing of Insurgents, Movement by Road, Land/Air Operations, and First Aid. All of it is useful to anyone planning for or participating in a COIN-type operation. 8 1/2 x 11, softcover, diagrams, charts, 110 pp. \$12.00



UNARMED AGAINST THE KNIFE

by Oscar Diaz-Cobo

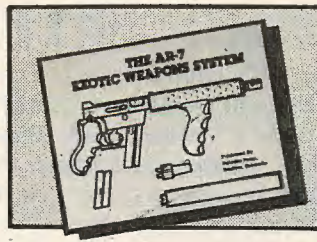
The book on knife combat that had to be written! Now you can learn how to stop knife-wielding thugs and bullies dead in their tracks. Not a rehash on general knife fighting, *Unarmed Against the Knife* is the only complete self-defense book on hand-to-knife combat. Author Oscar Diaz-Cobo learned the secrets of hand-to-hand combat on the streets of Newark, New Jersey, one of the meanest training grounds in America. Here he combines street savvy with close-combat martial arts to give you practical knife-fighting and disarming techniques. Over 100 photos demonstrate how to gain a mental and physical advantage over the attacker, then move in to attack and destroy him.

Chapter titles include: Psychology of the Knife Fighter, Physical and Mental Conditioning, Attack and Destroy, Combat Tactics, Hand-To-Knife Combat, Knife Lock and Hold Defenses, Specialized Knife Attacks, Make-shift Weapons and Attacks, and What to Do If You Get Cut. Ideal for self defense and martial arts experts as well as average safety conscious citizens. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, 100 photos, 88 pp. ISBN 0-87364-243-0

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"Having read your books, *Live Off the Land in the City and Country* and *Survival Poaching*, I feel compelled to write. I have, over the last few years, compiled a library of over forty survival books. Your books are a fine exception to those, being the most useful and sensible under the type of survival conditions which I envision."

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THE AR-7 EXOTIC WEAPONS SYSTEM

An unusual home workshop guide for the gun buff and hobbyist machinist. Over fifty working machinist's drawings, photos and full-scale templates show exactly how to convert the AR-7 .22 survival rifle into a full-automatic silenced machine pistol, submachine gun or sophisticated silenced weapon. *The AR-7 Exotic Weapons System* was created by the same firearms designer who authored the famed Paladin title, *Home Workshop Silencers*.

This new comprehensive instruction manual details how to modify the weapon's original receiver, fabricate new sear and safety, as well as make a simple yet efficient silencer group assembly. Each drawing in *The AR-7 Exotic Weapons System* is of the highest quality. Fans of exotic weaponry and amateur gunsmiths will find this a valuable addition to their libraries and an excellent gift book. For historical and reference purposes only. 9 x 12, softcover, machinist's drawings, photos, full-scale templates, 72 pp. ISBN 0-87364-242-2

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REAL SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

by Richard Harding Davis

Thrilling, true accounts of six wild-and-woolly nineteenth century mercenaries, told by a man who was there. Author Richard Harding Davis became known as the world's first modern war correspondent. He reported on the Spanish-American War, Greco-Turkish War, Boer War, and World War I, among others, always risking his life to obtain eyewitness battlefield accounts.

In *Real Soldiers Of Fortune*, he tells the stories of six men, "who for pay, or the love of adventure, fought under the flag of any nation." Discusses the fighting exploits of such notable mercs as William Walker (who conquered Nicaragua with fifty-seven men in 1855), Major-General Henry MacIver (fought under eighteen flags during his fifty-year career), Winston Churchill (the famous prime minister was first a soldier who fought in the Spanish-American and Boer Wars, and was with Kitchener at Khartoum), and Major Frederick Burnham (an American and former Indian fighter who became chief of British scouts during the Boer War). Eight rare photos of these men-of-action complement the text.

This exciting hardcover volume is an exact reprint of the scarce 1906 first edition, which commands high prices—if you can find a copy. Historians, collectors, and SOFers will want to order this one today. 5 x 7, hardcover, illus., 240 pp. ISBN 0-87364-239-2

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by Capt. Robert Cappel

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HOME WORKSHOP SILENCERS I

The first complete set of working machinist's drawings showing step-by-step construction of three different firearm silencers! All drawings are done to scale, and are of absolutely superb quality. Over fifty 9" x 12" machinist's drawings are presented. This beautiful large-format edition clearly details all construction and operation procedures for a smg silencer, a pistol silencer, and a simplified smg expedient silencer. Without doubt, these are the highest quality, most precise silencer designs available anywhere at any price. *Compare and see for yourself!*

Historians will recall that the famed Dutch underground armorer of WWII fabricated many silenced weapons for their behind-the-lines ops against the Nazis. If our own nation is ever invaded in the future, silenced firearms will certainly play an important role in resisting the enemy. Of course, Paladin Press unconditionally guarantees your satisfaction with this intriguing, all-new book. **WARNING:** severe state and federal regulations outlaw the possession of silencers unless an appropriate license is obtained. *Home Workshop Silencers I* is for reference and historical purposes only. Be warned! 9 x 12, softcover, illus., 72 pp. ISBN 0-87364-193-0

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE idea was to generate a little controversy. It's now obvious that we should have given more thought to just how "little" a controversy we wanted before we ran June's "Woodchuck Wars" by Maj. Jack Chase, July's "Make Mine M14" by Ken Hackathorn, July's "Sows' Ears, Mouse Guns, Woodchucks and Deerslayers" by Pete Kokalis and July's "Editorial Note" by Bill Guthrie.

One file folder on my desk is filling up with excellent letters on the "little" 7.62mm vs. 5.56mm controversy; another is filling up with absurd nonsense on the same subject; rumors are flying of engraved and polished 5.56mm and 7.62mm rounds being prepared for various individuals (including me) and some most interesting challenges have been extended. The "Caliber War" has certainly brought exciting days to Boulder.

What we were trying to do with that series of articles was present both sides of the issue and elicit some reader response. We used the articles by Chase and Hackathorn as stalking horses to draw out an impassioned defense of the 5.56mm from our military small-arms editor, Kokalis. Kokalis, who normally suffers slights of the 5.56mm cartridge with a telephonic growl, came out slugging—and a little too personally—and for that we apologize to Hackathorn.

Guthrie—among the majority of the staff who line up solidly behind the 7.62mm—asked for and got the "Editor's Note" space for what he titled "A Weapons Essay Without Numbers." He was attempting to put the entire issue in perspective.

Hackathorn and Kokalis are staunch defenders of their respective calibers, but Guthrie wanted to deal with the economic factors that led to the selection of the M16 as America's battle rifle.

Guthrie's column created almost as much controversy as all the other articles because some of our readers misinterpreted what he wrote and didn't understand why *Soldier Of Fortune* would print it.

SOF's editorials, as you may have noticed, are usually signed. There is a good reason for that. An unsigned editorial or one signed by Publisher Robert K. Brown reflects the opinion of the magazine. Signed editorials by other editors reflect the opinion of the editor who wrote them and the decision of SOF management that their opinion deserves space in the magazine. SOF has never issued a policy statement saying the 7.62mm is the better cartridge or vice versa.

The reason I think is obvious. Depending on the situation, I would recommend anything from a 5.56mm to a quad .50 to a radio-link to a B-52 as the weapon of choice. For an individual or an army, the chosen weapon depends on a lot of different factors, such as: How far will I have to carry it? What's the range? What's the battlefield condition? Is it desert or jungle? What's the other guy shooting? What are my allies using?

Some readers thought Guthrie wrote that the policy of an infantryman should be to shoot to wound. That's foolish and he didn't write that. Anyone's who's ever been in combat will tell you that an infantryman's only goal is to kill the SOB who's trying to kill him.

Guthrie's point was that some of the Defense Department personnel who were responsible for selecting the M16 as America's rifle in the 1960s took a strong stance based, as much as anything else, on the technological, ballistic and economic factors favoring a smaller cartridge. When the M16 came under harsh criticism in the late 1960s, one of the ideas that was bandied about as a favorable factor in the selection of the 5.56mm was that instead of killing, it produced wounds, which were more costly for the enemy to deal with. I suspect that is a rationalization created after the fact—but it would not surprise me in the least if someday we learn it was a factor in the selection of the 5.56mm cartridge.

When I was issued my "Mattel" (which I must point out in fairness was considerably different from today's M16s) and test-fired it for the first time, I got this "screwed" feeling. I didn't understand why until I read James Fallows' *National Defense*. He answered most of my questions in one section of his book. In November you'll be able to read it in an article we've titled "M16 Snafu."

Sorry, Pete, this month I'm the stalking horse.

—Jim Graves

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COVER: We aim to please — Odin International's Carlos Davila, wearing Airborne Com-mando cammies and beret, draws bead with new CETME MG82. This Spanish entry into the Squad Automatic Weapon competition proves to be light, accurate and simple with newly developed recoil action for 5.56 ammo. Photo: Peter G. Kokalis

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THE NEW NICARAGUA ...

Nicaragua's Sandinista Marxist-Leninist government has adopted a new national anthem which includes a reference to the United States as "the enemy of mankind."

Understandably, this is a little hard to swallow for American diplomats trying to deal with that Latin American government.

And speaking of Sandinistas, some readers may not know that the name comes from one Augusto Sandino, a bandit chieftain in Nicaragua in the late 1920s and early '30s. The United States Marines knew exactly what to do with him — they defeated and killed most of the bandits under his command and deposed him as a threat to Latin American stability.

THE LATEST FROM LATIN AMERICA: NICARAGUA ...

The Soviet Union has signed an aid agreement with Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government. It amounts to \$166.6 million in technical assistance and credits for Soviet-built projects.

The five-year pact makes Russia one of Nicaragua's leading benefactors along with Mexico, Libya and Venezuela.

The Reagan administration cut off U.S. aid to Nicaragua in March 1981, because Nicaragua supplies shipments of arms to the leftist guerrillas in El Salvador.

The United States has offered to resume aid provided Nicaragua stops the shipments, halts importing heavy offensive weapons, reduces the number of military advisers from ComBloc nations and renews "commitments to political freedom."

EL SALVADOR ...

The first contingent of Salvadoran soldiers trained in the United States has returned home — dressed in full combat gear and ready to take part in a continuing offensive against the communist insurgents in their country. Some 300 members of the "Billoso Fast Reaction Force" finished their counter-insurgency training at Fort Bragg, N.C., and returned home. They were to be followed soon by 560 more.

The force will be shuttled around El Salvador in Huey helicopters to back up regular units engaged in combat with the guerrillas.

Salvadoran communist rebels report that an American volunteer fighting alongside them has been killed by government troops during a battle in the village of Poza Honda some 70 miles northeast of San Salvador.

The man was identified only as Joseph David Anderson.

Meanwhile, Alvaro Magana has been sworn in as president of El

BULLETIN BOARD

by Bob Poos



Salvador and he immediately ruled out any immediate negotiations with the communist guerrillas there.

Magana is a political moderate who is backed by the United States. He is the first civilian president of El Salvador since 1979 and replaces Jose Napoleon Duarte who headed the civilian/military junta that has been ruling El Salvador.

LAOTIAN BLOW-UP ...

A Bangkok newspaper reports that Laotian resistance fighters have blown up a large fuel dump in Laos and then fled into the jungle, fighting a rear-guard action against Pathet Lao (communist) troops.

The *Bangkok Post* said one member of the resistance group was killed in the retreat. There was no estimate of Pathet Lao casualties.

Fighting in the area around the fuel dump was described as "intense but short-lived."

AFGHAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS UNITE ...

Spokesmen for seven factions of the Afghan resistance movement report that they have formed a united front to drive Soviet troops from their homeland and transform it into an Islamic state.

"We will never embrace a colonial power," said Abdur Rasal Sayai, president of the new organization, the Islamic Unity of the Mujahideen. "We will never submit to the Russians. If necessary, we will fight to the last moment of our lives."

FREEDOM FIGHTERS COLLECTION REPORT ...

SOF reminds its readers that collections for freedom fighters in Nicaragua and Afghanistan are still being taken. Here is our report as of press time:

Some \$50,000 has been taken in to buy weapons, medical supplies and other much needed gear for the men and women fighting communism in Afghanistan. However, contributions have begun to dwindle recently from a high of \$1,200 early in the campaign to an average of about \$350 a month lately. We urge you to support this worthy cause.

Contributions of combat clothing, web gear, shoes and other material for the anti-Sandinista forces continue to come in steadily but more is needed. Gear received so far includes: shirts, 260; trousers, 250 pairs; boots and shoes, 85 pair; socks, 25 pair; hats and caps, 20; belts, 20;

Continued on page 80

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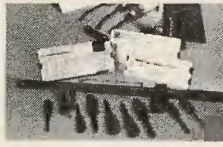
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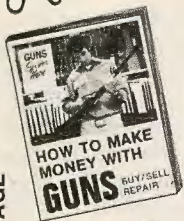
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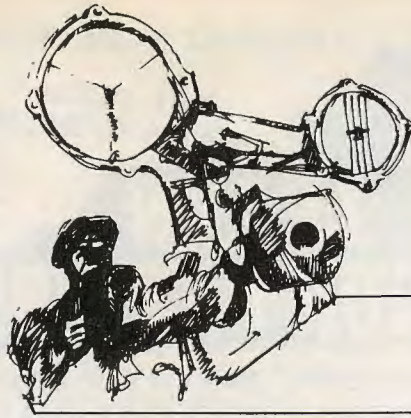
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PRIVATEERING FOR PROFIT, PART II ...

Sirs:

The item on "Naval Narcs?" in "Bulletin Board" (SOF, January '82) is interesting but incomplete. While our Constitution does provide for the issuing of letters of marque and reprisal to privateers, the Declaration of Paris in 1856 provides a code of law in time of war, including a liberal set of principles for neutral rights. In this declaration, privateering is, and remains, abolished. It was accepted by France, Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Turkey and Sardinia (i.e., the major world powers of the day). For various reasons, including the lack of a navy, the United States did not accept the declaration at this time. During the Spanish-American War both belligerents accepted the declaration's provisions. Its rules were considered binding in customary international law during World Wars I and II. As a result of this declaration and other developments, armed civilian vessels must be under a nation's military command or an actual part of the armed force of a nation. Police units patrolling for drug runners generally have to stay inside territorial waters — much the same limits imposed by law during the Prohibition "rumrunning" days.

Perhaps it would not be a good idea to revive the privateer concept now. During the revolts of Spain's New World colonies in the early 19th century many rebel "governments" issued letters of marque



FLAK

to people who were actually pirates and who preyed on any and all ships. The PLO and Libya would certainly jump at the chance to commission privateers to prey on our shipping.

Sincerely,
Gordon J. Douglas, Jr.
Fullerton, California

Thanks for the clarification; it's well taken. As for the PLO and Libya, well, pity the poor privateer who preys on our shipping. — The Eds.

VENEZUELA READERS WRITE ...

Sirs:

It was almost a year ago that a friend passed along to me a copy of an even older SOF that another co-worker had run across in the only drug store in town.

Since then, we have ferreted out other SOF followers and have read every issue we could obtain, regardless of vintage. We have since requested of certain visitors to our jobsite that they bring with them the latest issue of SOF; hence we are intermittently receiving more current issues. This has been a round-about way of saying that here, on the Paraguana Peninsula of Venezuela, you have a small but avid following.

Yours is one of two magazines that I read cover to cover, and my associates enjoy SOF as much, if not more, than I do. Articles on current exploits, Vietnam, the great wars, special units, martial arts, weapons and many other subjects that you address are always informative, often eye-opening and a necessary part of journalism today — if one really wants to know the truth about what is taking place in the world. One can only hope that more people will hear your voice in the dark.

For readers such as myself, with no military background, many of the abbreviations that appear in SOF articles are puzzling. Though we may be a minority, your consideration would be appreciated.

Yours Truly,
Phil Raiani
Estado Falcon, Venezuela

We like to hear from our foreign readers, and wish there were more of them. We don't take overseas SOFers into consideration when using many abbreviations and acronyms that are familiar to most Americans, but we'll make the effort to clarify as much as possible. — The Eds.

SEEKING ONLY THE TRUTH ...

Sirs:

Having received notice that my subscription is due for renewal, I choose to cancel it. I do so because of your editorial policy against the publication of fiction. Some time ago I submitted a short piece of fiction to you and received a call from Associate Editor Jim Coyne. He wanted to know if what I had written was fact or fiction, and complimented me on the story. Upon being told the story was fiction based on fact, the magazine withheld publication.

Continued on page 90

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Combat Pistolcraft

Michigan Armament's .45 Performance & Clothing Controversy

I recently had the opportunity to test and evaluate a new pistol from Michigan Armament, Inc., Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 9, Walled Lake, MI 48088. John Post of that firm told me of its plan to market a complete .45 1911 pistol with basic combat modification for a reasonable price. An interesting move, but I am usually cautious of such home-grown pistols and normally recommend only the original Colt product.

After trying out the Michigan Armament pistol, I must admit I am more impressed than I expected.

This .45 comes with an extended combat safety, Wilson high fixed combat sights, Shok-buff® and recoil spring. It has a funneled magazine well, National-Match-style trigger, Commander-style hammer, Pachmayr stocks and mainspring housing, as well as a polished feed ramp and throated barrel. The slide is a high-polished blue and the frame is hard-chrome-plated. The test pistol had a crisp four-pound trigger and shot just fine. The main parts, such as frame and slide, are Essex investment case parts. Barrels and most internal parts are either Colt or GI.

Although I would like to see another 50 guns in use before giving the Michigan Armament .45 a full endorsement, the fact is that for \$475 (just \$75 more than the current Colt MK1V), the test gun I used was a bargain. It worked perfectly, shot well and was ready for the range. The Michigan Armament .45 was, of course, not as finely finished as the Colt product, but it performed as well as the original.

For the price, it may be one of the best buys around.

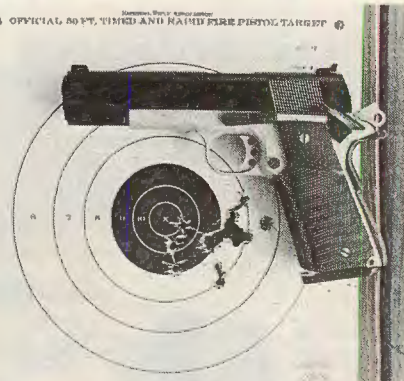
CONTROVERSY is now raging over the "correct" image of practical pistol shooting. I have written about the division in IPSC's ranks between those who want to develop defensive shooting skills and those who look at the handgun as a sporting instrument (see "Combat Pistolcraft," July '82). This division has been further intensified by those sportsmen who — hoping to make pistol shooting more palatable to the general public and the media — find any reference to the handgun as weapon unacceptable. In order to make IPSC work, all extremes must work together within the arena of competition, and each side must respect the attitudes of the other.

In the United States, the controversy of the IPSC image now extends to dress as well as gear. We often see people at practical shooting events wearing paramilitary



by Ken Hackathorn

OFFICIAL 40 FT. TUNED AND RAISED FIBRE PISTOL TARGET



Michigan Armament, Inc. custom-combat .45 pistol. Hackathorn fired 15 rounds of PMC .45 hardball at test target from 50 feet. Photo: Ken Hackathorn

or combat clothing or controversial T-shirts. Others prefer trendy sportswear. Now each group is complaining about the other's dress.

Some clubs must function in a social environment in which a paramilitary image could draw flak, and they are within their rights to request the limited use of fatigues or other military apparel. However, they should not go overboard and completely forbid wearing combat clothing or gear. Common sense should always be the key. The gunshop commando, decked out in cammies, boot knife, combat suspenders and web gear, can look as absurd at a shooting match as the individual who sports a purple jumpsuit with color-coordinated sunglasses. The individual club should ask shooters to keep from going to extremes rather than write up a prescriptive dress code. Remember, the United States is still a free country — if you want to shoot in your jockey shorts, that should be your decision.

The last two *Soldier of Fortune* conventions and three-gun matches have stressed the wearing of cammies and military clothing. Although this apparel may enrage some sportsmen, so be it. We of the SOF match enjoy ourselves. If the sight of combat shooters in camouflage is distasteful, then those who are upset by it should stay home. Those at the SOF matches are not worried about how they look, but concerned about their performance. ❧

Lest We Forget...

VIETNAM TRIBUTE

This is the most spectacular object ever made available to honor the brave Americans who fought for the preservation of freedom in Southeast Asia.



The Americans who served in the Vietnam War will be judged by history to be the heroes of that decade. Some were volunteers. Some were draftees. Most had other lives to lead. But when duty called, they served.

This is a *genuine* battle worthy Gerber Mark II Combat Knife—not a reproduction or a stylized display piece—authentic to Vietnam and specially embellished for this tribute—the *first* limited edition Gerber combat knife ever made.

In this, the tenth anniversary year of the last American combat patrol in Vietnam, The American Historical Foundation pays tribute to the Americans of all branches of the military who served our country in the struggle for the preservation of freedom in Southeast Asia.

These Americans can take pride in their many accomplishments. They did what the leadership of our nation asked them to do, and they did it well.

Each branch of the service will be honored with a separate tribute. The tribute announced here honors the United States Marine Corps.

A Lasting, Tangible Tribute

Now, the Marines who served—and, in a sense, the noble motivations and the American spirit that caused us to enter the conflict—are honored through the issuance of this lasting, tangible tribute.

As an appropriate counterpart to the ceremonial swords awarded to American military heroes of the 18th and 19th centuries, a presentation military knife was selected for this 20th century tribute.

Authentic To Vietnam

The Gerber Mark II Combat Knife was selected because it was one of the most famous knives of this war. This knife first saw use in Vietnam, having been created for combat there. It quickly became the chosen knife of many men of all branches of the U.S. military. It was especially popular with men of Marine Recon, Green Beret and SEAL/UDT units.

The original Vietnam-era "wasp body" blade shape—no longer produced—will be reintroduced especially for this. This blade is hardened, tempered, sharpened and honed by hand to a razor's edge; it is so sharp you can shave with it. The overall knife length is 12 1/2".

But unlike any knife ever made, this limited edition tribute has been given distinctive embellishments designed with the assistance of U.S. Marine Corps combat veterans of Vietnam.

Symbolic of jungle warfare, the hilt is produced in the colors of the oak-leaf pattern camouflage helmet cover worn by Marines in Vietnam. A gold-plated, fired enamel cloisonne medallion of the U.S. Marine Corps insignia forms the focal point of the grip.

Marine Corps Combat Scene

The scene etched on the mirror-polished steel blade permanently records Marines in combat in Vietnam.

Marines armed with their M-16s, an M-60, an M-79 grenade launcher, an M-19 mortar and hand grenades close in on a fortified enemy position while Marine CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopters drop off supplies at the rear.

On the blade shoulder is etched the insignia of the Third Marine Amphibious Force, representative of all U.S. Marine Corps units that served in Southeast Asia. Or, if you prefer, the division insignia of your choice can be etched in this position.

As an important reminder to present and future generations of the significant sacrifices made by Americans who served in Southeast Asia, you will also receive a copy of "Vietnam Tribute." This was written by General William Westmoreland, former commander of all U.S. military forces in Vietnam; it is being published by the Foundation as part of this project.

Solid Mahogany Display Case

To display and preserve your U.S. Marine Corps Vietnam Tribute Combat Knife, you will receive a furniture-finished solid mahogany case of military design, with olive drab Certificate of Authenticity, recessed and fitted into the inner lid.

But only 2,500 of each knife will be made—one to represent each one thousand Americans of the 2,500,000 who served in the military services in Southeast Asia. Each limited edition serial number will be engraved on the reverse of each blade, inscribed on the Certificate of Authenticity and registered with The American Historical Foundation, as further assurance of this strict limit.

First Option, Without Obligation

As an added advantage, you will be guaranteed the opportunity, *without obligation*, to reserve subsequent knives in this series with the same serial number—so you can systematically acquire a complete matched set. These tributes—one to the Army, one to the Air Force and one to the Navy—will be announced to you privately, one knife at a time, in the months ahead.

You will also be made a member of The American Historical Foundation, with members across the U.S. and in 27 other countries worldwide. You will receive, at no expense, hard to obtain information concerning military history and the history, care, display and collecting of knives, swords, and militaria.

Whether or not you or a member of your family served in Vietnam, this tribute will give you a renewed sense of pride in the Americans who answered the call to duty in the defense of freedom in Southeast Asia. Contributions will also be made by the Foundation to Vietnam veterans associations, to help them to continue to perpetuate the memory of the Americans honored by this tribute.

How to Reserve

This is available only through The American Historical Foundation. You may write, call, personally visit or use the reservation form below. Reservations will be acknowledged immediately. Write or call about having your name, service number, dates, etc., etched on the blade reverse. You may send a deposit or payment in full. You may inspect your knife for a full 30 days prior to deciding to keep it. Satisfaction is guaranteed.

Prompt action is suggested to avoid the inevitability of higher prices and the completion of the reservation roster for this strictly limited edition.

The American Historical Foundation is a member of the Marine Corps Historical Foundation, the U.S. Marine Raider Association and other military and military history organizations.

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IN REVIEW



RIOT CONTROL: Materiel and Techniques. By Col. Rex Applegate. Paladin Press, Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306. 1981. 332 pp. Illustrated. \$19.95. Review by Ken Hackathorn.

EVENTS of the past couple of decades have shown the increasing danger of failure to prepare for violence in the event of urban civil disorder. Col. Applegate provides a straightforward, no-nonsense book on the mechanics of mob and crowd control, outlining the preparation

necessary to handle civic violence (such as the 1980 Miami riots) before it breaks out.

Police or governmental agencies charged with riot duties, crowd control and mob actions will be wise to consider Col. Applegate's new book, **Riot Control: Materiel and Techniques.** An update of his previous *Crowd and Riot Control*, this new work includes current information dealing with techniques and hardware designed for riot control. In-depth coverage is provided on tools and tactics required for non-lethal mob and crowd-

control situations. Details concerning the proper gas agents for riot control in various conditions are carefully explained.

The need for proper unit structure and the deployment of men is critical. Col. Applegate points out that special units, organized, highly-trained, appropriately equipped task forces, must be immediately available if stability and order are to prevail. Most police agencies press regular patrolmen into riot duty without giving them proper training or deploying them in sufficient numbers. The results are often catastrophic as history has shown.

Information about current armaments, vehicles and special equipment, including sound devices, foam and gas dispensers, is explored in the text. The area of passive night-vision devices was more cursory than I would have preferred. With so much violence caused by snipers and looters today, the current state-of-the-art in night-vision equipment is highly valuable to riot-control agencies.

The chapters on organization of men and materiel for riot-control duty should offer excellent insight for individuals and training officers assigned to prepare an agency for riot duty. I found the chapter on police raids superb reading and reflective of the professional style that has made Col. Rex Applegate an expert in the field.

Paladin Press also publishes two other important works by Applegate: *Kill or Be Killed* and *Scouting and Patrolling*. The latter book was reviewed in this column in SOF's March '82 issue. ✕

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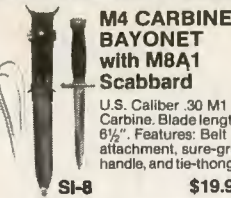
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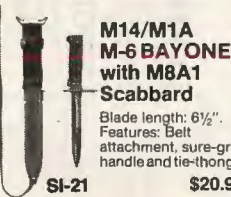
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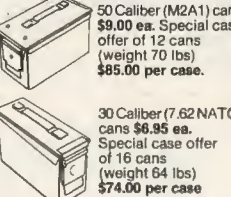
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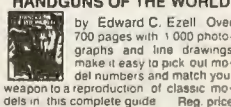


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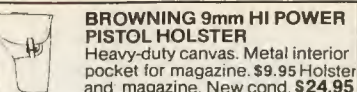
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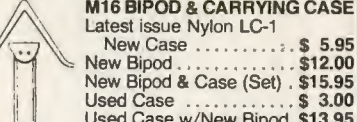
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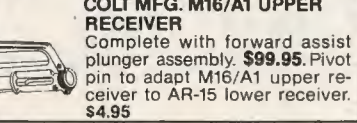
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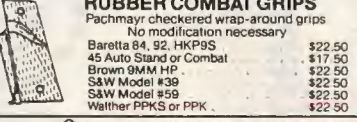
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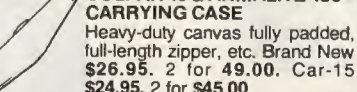
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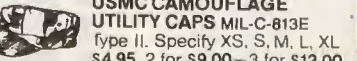
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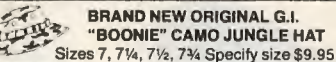
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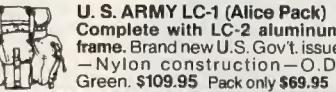
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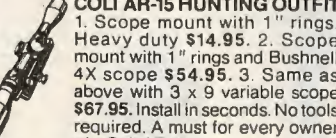
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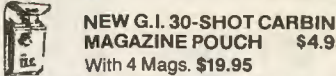
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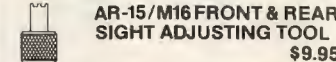
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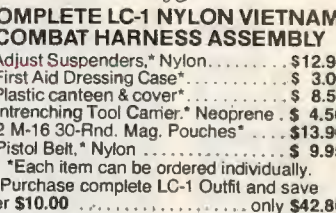


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I WAS THERE

by Bob Poos
as told to M.L. Jones

In our July issue, SOF's Executive Editor Bob Poos spoke about his introduction to the Saigon Bureau in 1965. Here the former AP correspondent talks of combat in Vietnam:

I saw a lot of brave men in Vietnam. Cool men under fire. Even a few who were, or seemed to be, absolutely fearless in the terrible face of battle. Usually they were in the Special Forces, airborne units and the Marines.

But the coolest I ever saw was in none of these. He was a scrawny kid in the Seventh Cavalry, a "straightleg" outfit with a good reputation.

I don't remember exactly where this incident took place, somewhere east of Bong Song in the Central Vietnamese Piedmont area, I believe. I do remember that the company I was with took a trench formerly occupied by the North Vietnamese. A few dead ones remained.

All of us assumed that the retreating "hardhats," as we called them, had taken cover in a tree line about 200 meters away. The company lay in the trench, panting from exertion, excitement and, at least in my case, fear.

None of us dreamed that the enemy was anywhere nearby.

I lay next to the kid, perhaps three feet away. All of a sudden, seemingly from the ground itself, an object flew in front of us. It turned end-over-end a couple of times and then lit directly between me and the kid. It was a Red Chinese stick grenade.

There was absolutely no time in which to do anything — except wait for the explosion. The thing lit, sputtered for a moment and then went off with a weak "pop." The detonator had fired — but failed to set off the explosive charge.

The kid looked at me and said without emotion, conversationally, "I didn't know them little bastards was that close."

Then he stood up, took a couple of paces over the trench lip, leaned forward and opened up with his M16, turned and flopped back down in our trench.

It seems that there was another, shallow trench just a few meters away and a couple of North Vietnamese had elected to remain behind and continue to resist the cavalry. They now were dead.

The kid lit a cigarette and grinned at me. We each took half of the grenade, which had split in two, for souvenirs.

I used mine for years as a paperweight until it got lost during one of the countless moves required of an Associated Press reporter. I wish I still had it — but I do have the memory. ☒

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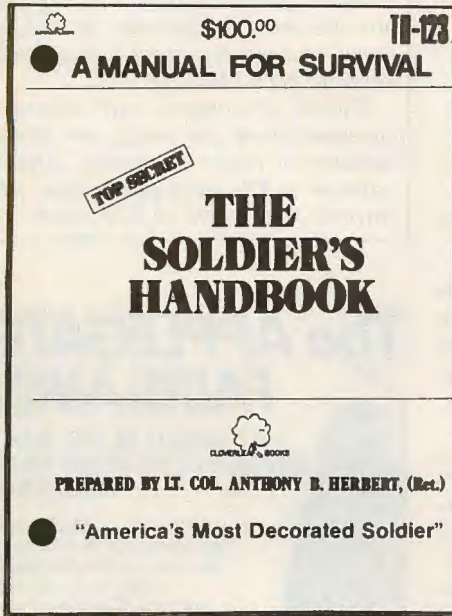
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Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Wednesday, Aug. 27

The book's already a big hit among old military hands, narcotics folk, cops, corporations and individuals with more than just a little to protect. And, promises Herbert, the book will be updated periodically. Which might prove necessary. After all, you never know when another Noble Cause may come loping around the next corner. □

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IT HAPPENED TO ME

by Robert Watts
as told to M.L. Jones

During his six-year Army "career," Robert Watts served for 52 months in Vietnam with the 4th, 5th and 25th Infantry Divisions, the 101st Airborne Division, 5th Special Forces Group and 17th Aviation Group. As he tells it:

ONE of the more dubious pleasures of duty at the 4th Infantry Division's base camp near Pleiku was the monthly sweep conducted by personnel from Division headquarters, supply and services, the 124th Signal Battalion and so on. You can picture the scene, I'm sure: several hundred base-camp commandos tramping about the bush with their primary emphasis being not to get lost.

As the resident grunt, I was detailed to instruct and command elements of the 124th Signal Battalion on one such walk in the sun, a walk which, while not one of the war's high points, at least provided some comic relief.

Moving more or less on line (that was the intention anyway) down a steep hill which had seen its share of HE (high explosives), one of the signalmen approached a fallen tree. Suddenly from behind the tangled mass of roots, Charley popped up, black pajamas, SKS and all. From my vantage point I couldn't tell who was more surprised, the illustrious fighter for the revolution or the hard-core radio operator. In any case, they both jumped so at the sight of each other that they dropped their weapons. Charley then turned to run, the signalman came out of his state of shock and leaped after him, missed and fell heavily to the ground.

The last we saw of Charley he was disappearing into the brush headed south, probably already wondering how he was going to explain the loss of the SKS.

And the signalman? When he fell he broke his collar bone, and a month or so later was awarded a Purple Heart for "injury as a direct result of enemy action." No doubt our hero put the extra 10 Civil Service exam points to good use when he ETSed; he seemed like the type. But I sometimes wonder how he tells the story to his fellow postal workers.✕

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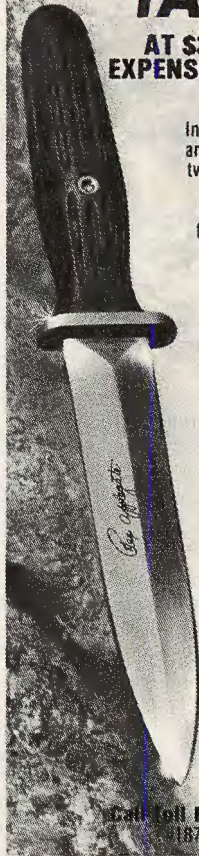
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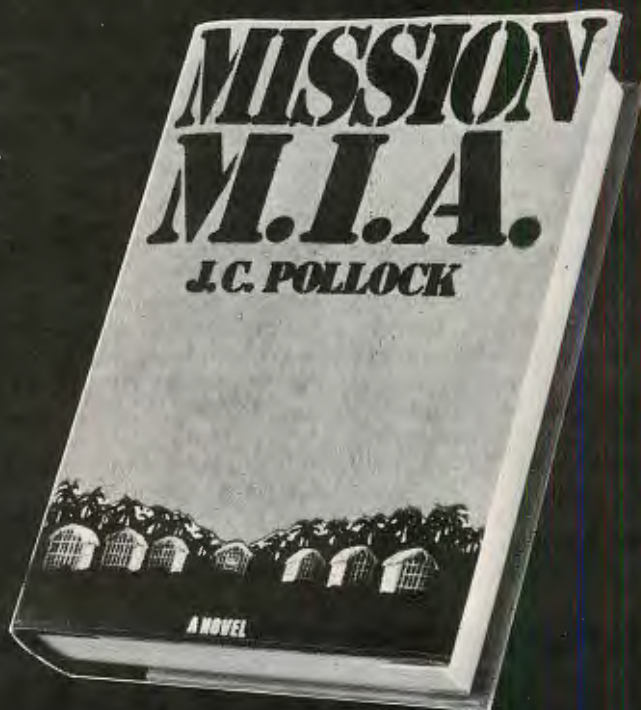
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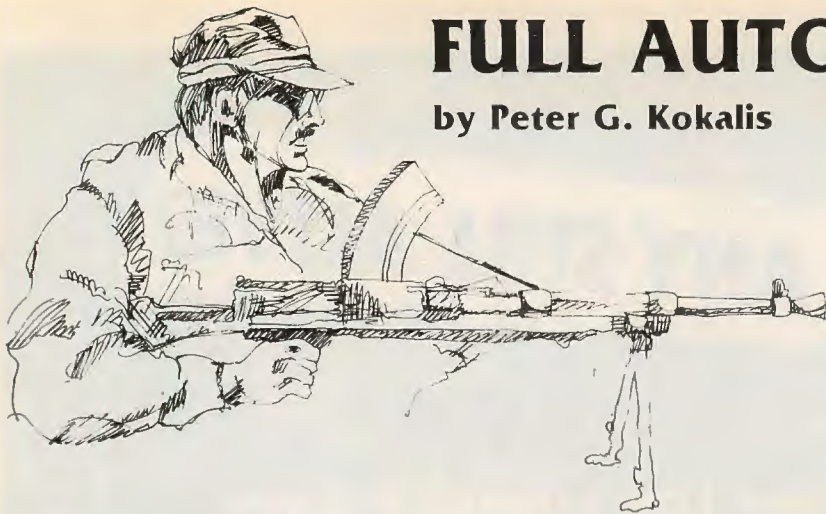
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FULL AUTO

by Peter G. Kokalis

Lake City Correction & Auto Conversions

MY U.S. Army Ordnance Deep Throat, a most impeccable source, has informed me that I erred badly in implying that the lack of a headstamp on the 7.62x39mm ComBloc Lake City ammunition was an attempt to disguise its origin ("Full Auto," SOF, April '82). When this order was received at Lake City in July 1970, the instructions were to hold down all costs and to use U.S. components to the greatest extent feasible.

As an example, lot acceptance tests were initially limited to 200-yard accuracy and ambient temperature function/casualty in the AK-47 rifle. Since the primary intended user, Cambodia, was receiving the ammunition as emergency assistance, it was agreed that they would probably not be submitting any malfunction reports or otherwise need individual round identification. Under these circumstances, it was decided to eliminate the case headstamp as a cost savings.

A heading bunter usually wears off the imprint first and this allowed use of still serviceable 7.62mm NATO case tooling.

The 20-round carton was plainly marked as to type and caliber; and upon filling, the Lake City lot number was stamped in ink on each carton. The outer wooden packing crate was also stenciled with the nomenclature, lot number, quantity of rounds (1,000) and manufacturer.

The only thing which was security-classified about the Lake City 7.62x39mm production was the quantity manufactured. The total production was more than 125 million, not 25 million as I reported in April.

My source has also provided the final frosting on the M85 machine-gun's half-baked cake. There was a heavy price paid for this weapon on the altar of ammunition interchangeability. The M85 takes a special link (M15A3), a belt of which will not function in the Browning M2 HB .50-caliber machine gun. The same is, of course, true of the M2 or M9 link used in the Browning, which will not feed in the M85. Result: two different stockpiles of caliber .50 ammunition. They might as well be different calibers since in combat the user is not going to have the time or TOE equipment to delink and relink if the wrong pack is issued.

SOF reader Ken Vnuck of Toledo, Ohio, writes: *It appears to be a popular fad these days to convert semiautomatic weapons to full-automatic. There are numerous kits and instruction manu-*

als for the conversion of such guns as the Colt AR-15, H&K, Uzi and many others. I have fired several types of full-automatic weapons but never a conversion.

First, aside from the legal aspects of making these conversions, are there any mechanical problems involved? I have heard, for instance, that the barrel of the M16A1 is heat-treated differently than the AR-15 and that other tolerances and the quality control are different.

What effect does the conversion have on the cyclic rate as compared to the military selective-fire version? And finally, are there any advantages to converting a weapon rather than simply buying the selective-fire model? For example, where does one buy a brand-new full-auto Uzi?

The legal aspects are never an aside when contemplating a full-auto conversion. To begin with, you must live in a state, county and municipality where it is legal for an individual to possess automatic weapons. Then, you have to file a BATF Form 1 (if you intend to do the work yourself) and await its approval, or have your conversion done by a licensed Class 2 manufacturer. In either case, you will pay a \$200 transfer tax.

All of the so-called "drop-in" auto sear kits I have examined were out of tolerance and exhibited poor quality control. They were as sleazy as the individuals peddling them. My advice is to use a reliable Class 2 manufacturer who will guarantee the use of genuine government-issue parts in making your conversion. This will reduce the problem of reliability and eliminate any compromise in quality.

There is absolutely no difference in tolerances, heat-treatment or quality control between Colt's commercial AR-15 rifle and the M16A1 the company makes for government contract. Outside of the selective-fire option and its components, they differ only insofar as the AR-15 still retains the original-type upper receiver without the forward bolt-assist. As currently manufactured, both are excellent state-of-the-art assault rifles.

Provided the proper parts have been used and the appropriate care taken in their assembly and the necessary receiver modifications, conversions of this type should have no effect on the specified full-auto cyclic rate of the weapon. The use of ammunition loaded to the weapon manufacturer's original specifications is a more important consideration.

The advantages of full-auto conversions are a function of availability. The M16A1 rifle is in short supply on the civilian market and commands premium prices. Even the lowly MAC-10 SMG, once known as the "poor man's machine gun," is sliding toward a \$500 to \$600 price tag in its pre-auction version.

Foreign-made machine guns — such as the Uzi which you mentioned — imported subsequent to the enactment of the 1968 Gun Control Act, are available by law only to Class 3 dealers as sales samples and to police departments. ☒

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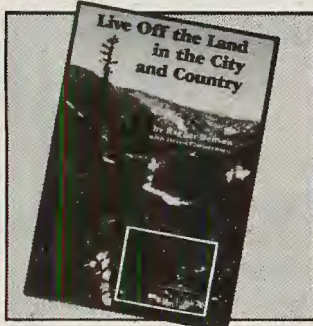


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LIVE OFF THE LAND IN THE CITY AND COUNTRY

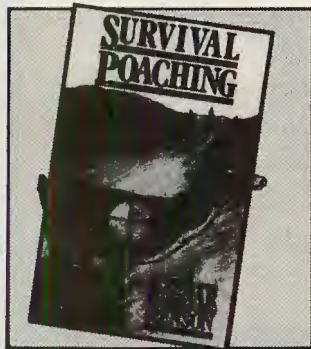
by Ragnar Benson

Not just another "eat roots and berries" book! Ragnar Benson, famed survival writer and best-selling Paladin author, looks back at his experiences while living off the land—even in the city—for the past forty years. He reveals a totally practical survival program unlike any other. Benson believes that wild, fresh game is the best source of nutrition in a do-or-die situation. He tells you how to find it, even in urban habitats.

Benson's all-new book covers how to make your own cache tubes and which supplies to store away in them. He also gives hands-on advice about survival medicine, firearms, reloading, fuel storage, diesel generators, re-treating, etc. Other comprehensive, photo-illustrated chapters explain how to raise livestock and vegetables/grains the smart way. A gold mine of native American lore about curing hides, preserving meats and vegetables, foraging, and trapping the Indian way. Benson even provides plans for building your own A-frame cabin, just like his, from local timber in one summer—3,000 square feet of living space for under \$10,000.

This complete guide to surviving in style is, of course, written in Benson's lively, down-home manner. Survivalists, retirees, backpackers, and anyone looking for a more self-sufficient lifestyle should definitely have this one in their libraries! 5½ x 8½, hardcover, over 100 photos, 263 pp.
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by Ragnar Benson

Gives practical information on collecting large or small numbers of wild game under virtually any circumstances. The methods and traps described by Benson are known only to one Indian tribe and a few old-timers. Benson's uncle and teacher was a member of this tribe; Benson is an old-timer now with forty years of poaching experience behind him. He tells you how to get a deer any time you go hunting for one; how to live off the land, whether in the city or country; gives plans for dozens of ingenious, effective traps, snares, and deadfalls; also plans for permanent concealed traps for small game and fish; lessons on woodcraft and scouting; covers equipment, firearm selection, ammo choices, and more. 5½ x 8½, hardcover, illus., 250 pp.
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by Marcus Wayne Ratledge

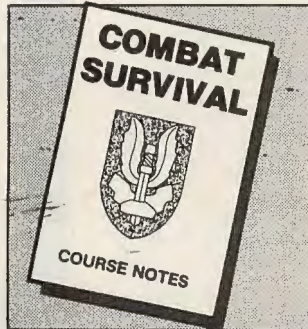
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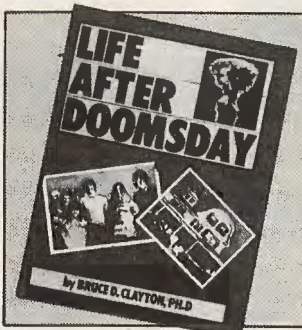
FLEXIBLE WEAPONS

by John Sanchez

From the author of *Slash and Thrust* comes the definitive study on flexible weapons, complete with construction details and training methods. Revealing a unique dimension to self-defense, Sanchez examines the advantages to fighting with flexible weapons. Chain maces, manrikikusari, steel whips, meteor balls, and rope knives—all are treated individually and intensively. Their lethal potential is for real! And realism—physical and mental—is the bottom line in this book. The author offers programs for solo and partner training; the section on sparring techniques includes designs for mock weapons and protective gear. Line drawings illustrate assorted weapons, strikes, carries, engagement attitudes, and anatomical targets. Blocking, gripping, locking, roping, and thrusting are also discussed in specific detail. Sanchez's new manual is a companion piece to the popular *Slash and Thrust*; at the same time *Flexible Weapons* stands alone as a very special self-defense book. 5½ x 8½, softcover, illus., 80 pp.

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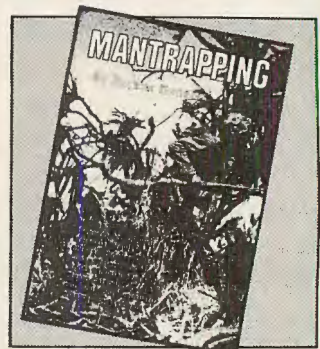
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by Vincent Joseph Guarino

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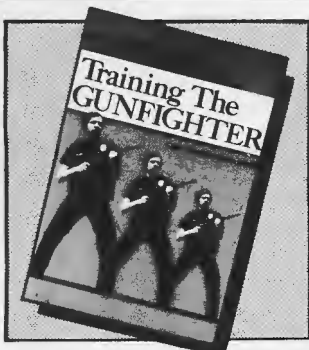
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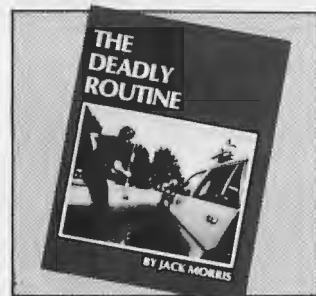
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Special Forces sergeant with a German FG-42 assault rifle in shoulder firing position. This WW II era weapon broke new ground in small arms design. It fired its 7.92mm rounds from a closed bolt in semiauto mode, and from an open bolt in full auto mode. Photo from "Special Forces Combat Firing Techniques."

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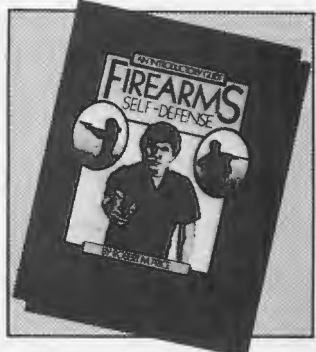
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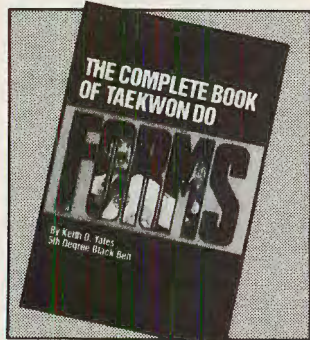
As crime rates rise, more and more people turn to firearms as a last means of self-defense. Unfortunately, many gun-owners have little or no training in their proper and safe defensive use. These shortcomings can have tragic consequences. *Firearms Self-Defense: An Introductory Guide* is meant to help correct this situation. Price uses nontechnical language and high-quality photos to explain how firearms function and how to use them safely and legally in self-defense situations. Chapter titles include: Is A Gun The Answer? The Use Of Deadly Force, Safety, Permits And Legality, Buying Your Gun, Care And Maintenance, Basic Marksmanship, and five others. 8 1/2 x 11, hardcover, 125 photos, 160 pp. ISBN 0-87364-218-X **\$19.95**

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Above photos are from a forthcoming Paladin book about the guerrilla warfare tactics of Nazi Germany's terrifying SS Werwolf movement. Their fanatical motto was: "Hate is our prayer, revenge our battle cry!" At top left, young Werwolf members are instructed in the use of the Panzerfaust, a throwaway grenade launcher. At top right are a group of Hitler Youth boys, who often constituted the ranks of the various Werwolf groups. Check the next Paladin catalog for information on other new titles from the Action Library!



THE COMPLETE BOOK OF TAEKWON DO FORMS
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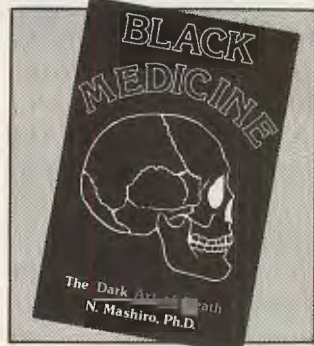
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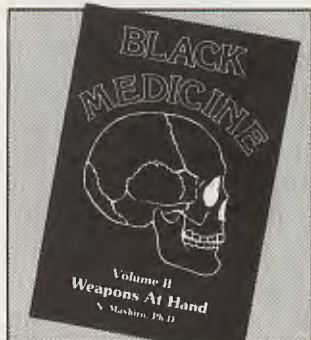


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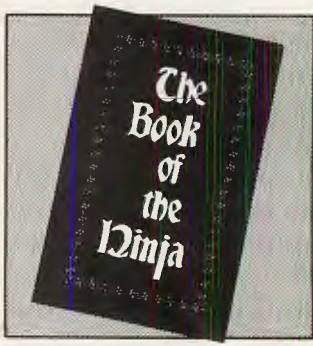
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Rewriting History: Gen. Giap & American Newspeak

by Karl Phaler

Karl Phaler left the U.S. Navy as a lieutenant in 1968. He is now an attorney in southern California. Al Santoli has written of Phaler's three Vietnam tours in Everything We Had.

A great deal of public attention is now focused on the question of whether American assistance to the government of El Salvador might result in our becoming involved in "another Vietnam." The question assumes, of course, that "another Vietnam" means the same thing to everyone. If we do not share a common understanding of what happened in Vietnam, it is impossible to draw useful conclusions for our present guidance.

A clear example of the media's understanding of Vietnam was provided on the night of 1 April 1982, on the late evening news service of a San Diego television station. In the space between the weather wrap-up and the final sports news, a filler appeared upon the screen, informing the audience that "Vo Nguyen Giap, who engineered the defeat of the American forces in Vietnam, was removed from his post in the Vietnamese Politburo."

We have been warned repeatedly that if we do not remember our history we shall be doomed to repeat our mistakes. Indeed, that is the entire sense in which the "another Vietnam" question is discussed. But what if we remember our history incorrectly? What if, during the apparent good-faith attempt to sort out where we are going, we fall to telling ourselves lies about where we have been? The massive distortion of history encapsulated in the television item about Gen. Giap makes it clear that these are very real concerns.

The truth about Giap is recorded largely in his own works, notably *People's War, People's Army* (1962), in which he set forth the principles of guerrilla warfare he had adopted in his fight against the French throughout Indochina until Dien Bien Phu and Geneva in 1954. The facile assumption, of course, is that these often-praised views of Giap's were responsible for the North Vietnamese conquest of the South in 1975.

Even without further examination, troubling questions appear concerning this reputed "engineer" of an American defeat. In 1954, Gen. Giap managed to achieve a victory over French forces in Vietnam. Seven years later he presented his record of those events, dressed up in the language of inevitability, in *People's War*. Even as

the book was published, Giap was beginning a 14-year struggle to enforce the will of North Vietnam over the people and the various governments in the South. If the 1975 victory is owing to Gen. Giap, why have the Vietnamese, only seven years after a second triumph, cast Giap out in disgrace?

The available documentation, which is extensive, indicates that Giap's engineering was soundly defeated during the American era — not once, but twice. Giap's first all-out offensive of the "anti-American" war was staged in a lunar new year's truce. The Tet offensive of 1968 was the single worst military defeat suffered by communist forces in Indochina since the arrival of Japan's Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. It was also (thanks to the American press and, even more, television) a tremendous media success for the North. The communist recognition of this vital truth has underlain the larger part of their subsequent success worldwide.

Gen. Giap followed up his 1968 military malfeasance with the abortive Great Easter Invasion of 1972. (This event is almost never recalled in any media discussions of Vietnam — but then, it does not reflect mythic invincibility on the part of the North.) The most interesting aspect of the 1972 failure of the North Vietnamese to conquer the South is that it was intended to have been the knock-out blow which would compel a complete surrender rather than a negotiated settlement in Paris.

It was, on the record, a disaster. The North Vietnamese suffered 100,000 combat fatalities. After the 1968 Tet offensive, about 4,000 Vietnamese villages remained under communist control. After the Easter offensive of 1972, fewer than 1,000 villages remained under their rule. As Gunter Lewy has pointed out in his indispensable book, *America in Vietnam*, our friend Giap must take a large share of the blame for this failure, although "the mistakes made by the strategist, Giap, were compounded by his field commanders."

These mistakes included unwise concentrations which exposed North Vietnamese troops to the firepower of American supporting arms (not troops) and repeated communist "shock-wave" assaults which were withstood by the often-maligned ARVN forces who prevailed on the fields of battle. Whether the North Vietnamese defeat should be ascribed to Giap's departure from his own doctrines (partially true) or to his simple mismanagement of the battlefield (ditto), it must in any case be laid largely at his door.

FOR 30 years the great strength of Uncle Ho's generation was its ability to adapt to alterations in the objective circumstances of unfolding history. Giap's parallel failures were not to be repeated. The armed forces of North Vietnam spent the 1972-1975 period preparing a massive logistical base for their very conventional and very powerful invasion.

Continued on page 77

BRIDEGROOMS OF DEATH

IN the fateful days at the beginning of the Nationalist rebellion against the Spanish Republic in 1936, the Spanish Foreign Legion was in the vanguard of the Army of Africa which secured a foothold on the Iberian peninsula for the Nationalist revolt in the south. Small in numbers and without armor at the outbreak of the rebellion, the Foreign Legion fanned out rapidly in flying columns carried by trucks and buses through southern Spain. A battalion flown in on Junkers Ju 52 transports captured Seville, and then, moving north, the Legion crushed Republican resistance with ruthless efficiency.

This fast-moving campaign was vital to the initial success of the Nationalist uprising: The legionnaires were used as shock troops in operations that demanded determination and a spirit of sacrifice in which they excelled. With the paradoxical cry of "Long live death!" they attacked and overran positions held by the more numerous but less experienced Republican militias. As professionals with a fanatical zeal and *esprit de corps*, the legionnaires later proved an equal match for the elite Republican units, the International Brigades, when

the two forces eventually clashed at the gates of Madrid.

Founded in 1920, the Spanish Legion was inspired by its renowned French counterpart, but the Spanish organization's ideology had a distinctive character imbued with Catholicism and medieval chivalry. Though its credo was thus unique, the Spanish Legion illustrates characteristics of elite military units operating worldwide during the 20th century. The example of the Legion also refutes the popular notion that those who fight for profit or the sheer love of combat are amoral adventurers who sell out to the highest bidder. The organization's soldiers were infused not only with nationalism, but also with a strict code of principles that exacted self-sacrifice and unswerving loyalty.

When the Legion was organized, the Spanish colonial army in Morocco suffered from a malaise extending to all levels of training, equipment, leadership and morale. Several factors accounted for the backward state of Spanish military science. After its crushing defeat in the Spanish-American War of 1898, Spain remained isolated from the mainstream of European industrial progress. Because the nation hadn't participated in WWI, its armed forces failed to acquire the new military skills and improved techniques gained by the belligerents. Finally, the rapid turnover in Spanish ministers of war prevented them from carrying out proposed reforms and innovations in the armed forces.

Despite these drawbacks, Spain entered the Moroccan campaign hoping to

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John H. Galey is a professional historian who specializes in Latin America and modern Europe. He declares, "I think my interest in the Spanish Foreign Legion-type of military organization derived from my father's experiences in the French Foreign Legion during WWI."

Although he was born in the United States, Galey spent his childhood in Caracas, Venezuela. After service in the U.S. Army in the early 1960s, the author lived in Spain, the Canary Islands and the Spanish Sahara where he personally interviewed several Spanish legionnaires.

An earlier version of Galey's article appeared in the April 1969 issue of the *Journal of Contemporary History*, a British publication.

— M.L. Jones



Spain's Elite Foreign Legion

by John H. Galey

acquire a new empire in Africa and to regain national prestige lost in 1898. But although two decades had passed since that catastrophe, the army still had obsolete equipment and insufficient training, and it was burdened by a grotesquely large number of senior officers. In Morocco, Spain tried to fight a conventional European war against native tribesmen expert in the use of their own terrain and guerrilla warfare, and commanded by Abdel Krim, a skilled military leader with an abiding hatred for Spain (see "Morocco's Murderous Marauders," *SOF*, March '81). Spain's reverses on the Moroccan battlefields revealed the need for complete reorganization of the nation's military forces, but little was accomplished, despite prolonged, embarrassing govern-

ment investigations and the rising discontent of the Spanish public.

In the midst of this unpopular Moroccan conflict, fought by officers who made fatal mistakes and young conscripts who lacked enthusiasm for Spain's cause, one Spanish officer devised a formula for creating superior soldiers. Lt. Col. Jose Millan Astray, who had formerly led a unit of Moorish regulars, planned to form a volunteer military unit that would utilize the best fighting capabilities of all nationalities, including Spaniards. Millan Astray envisioned the Spanish Foreign Legion as a separate unit with the elan and efficiency

Infantry "tabor" of Moroccan "Regulares" march through Madrid. Rifles are Spanish 1893 Mauser in cal. 7mm. Photo: UPI.



of an elite, small organization. The Legion would have its own administration, supply corps and officer cadres. It would be an army within an army, with a sense of independence and a chance to win battle honors on its own merit. It could be used separately or with other troops when the occasion demanded. It would provide a highly mobile infantry force which could be rushed into battle at any critical point. Its officers would be selected from the most capable in the Spanish army. The Legion would receive the best weapons available, its own system of training, a distinctive uniform, and wholesome and plentiful food which the regular army lacked.

Millan Astray's plan derived in part from the example of foreign and Spanish volunteers who fought in the Carlist civil wars of the early 19th century. He was also influenced by the French Foreign Legion's battle record in the First World War and the vital role it played in maintaining French control over Algeria. During a 20-day visit to this colony, he personally studied the French Foreign Legion's recruiting methods, organization and operation in the field. Having previously visited the academies of St. Cyr and St. Maxient; he was on good terms with the French military; his cordial reception in Algeria was also due to the intercession of King Alfonso XIII on behalf of French prisoners of war in Germany in 1914-1918.

During his Algerian tour, Millan Astray was impressed by the need to employ, as in the French Foreign Legion, a credo or set of principles to make a cohesive, dedicated force from volunteers with dissimilar backgrounds and motivations. The French Legion's demand for unswerving loyalty, courage and self-sacrifice particularly influenced the Spanish officer, but he would give his own creation a unique ideology.

In January 1920, his proposal was approved in principle by a royal order. Numerous critics derided the idea of a foreign legion, but Millan Astray had supporters in high places. These included the new minister of war, who regarded the volunteer unit as a means of reducing conscription demands in Spain;

this would save Spaniards from being "immolated in the unrewarding campaigns of Africa."

After two warrants authorized recruitment and defined the unit's composition, the Legion formally came into being. Anticipating a possible reaction in European countries against recruitment of their nationals, Spain justified its procedure on the ground that "the state has absolute sovereignty within its territorial limits, and can do what it deems convenient for its interests."

Posters at the first recruiting centers in Spain proclaimed the glories of military life in an elite infantry corps, and made the less lofty appeal of steady pay and good food. Within a few days, more than 400 Spaniards enlisted; Millan Astray enthusiastically called them "the foam, the flower, the cream of adventurers." After assuming command of the Legion, he offered the position of second-in-command to Francisco Franco, the future Spanish dictator, who had an outstanding previous record in



Spanish Foreign Legion badge worn by those who served in former Spanish Sahara. Photo: John H. Galey

leading a unit of Moorish regulars. Other professionally minded, ambitious officers volunteered, for leadership of soldiers in an elite unit, which promised to achieve a distinguished battle record, would enhance their reputation and fur-

ther their careers. Millan Astray selected only those with demonstrated ability. Thus Franco and a small group of other talented officers arrived at Dar Riffien, near Cueta, Morocco, where the first Legion training center was established.

The recruits were organized into *banderas* (flags), which were units of slightly less than battalion size. The Legion *bandera* of the Moroccan war had two rifle companies, one machine-gun company, a platoon of sappers, and a transport and supply unit. Originally the Legion had three *banderas*; during the larger conflict of the Spanish civil war, these eventually increased to 20. The small size of the Legion enhanced the closeness and group solidarity characteristic of elite military units in general. The evolution of close communion and unity among legionnaires contrasted sharply with the lack of cohesion in the unwieldy, loosely organized regular-army units.

Seeking to attract foreign volunteers, the Spanish government established

YANK MERCS IN SPANISH SKIES

by Mark Zytner

Volunteers from many nations, including professional soldiers of fortune and fast-buck air mercenaries, fought in Spanish skies for both Nationalist and Republican air forces in Spain's bitter civil war which served as a combat testing zone and dress rehearsal for German, Italian and Soviet participants in WWII. Yank mercs also flew in Spanish skies, mostly for Republican Spain.

The first handful of volunteer pilots to fly for Nationalist Spain, excluding Italian pilots and aircrewmembers enrolled in the Spanish Foreign Legion's *Aviacion del Tercio* on a temporary basis, were assigned to the Blue Patrol (*Patrulla Azul*) and then to No. 3 Blue Squadron (3 *Escuadra Azul*), both commanded by Joaquin Garcia Morato, the greatest Spanish civil war ace, credited with downing 40 enemy aircraft.

Few Americans flew for the Nationalists because large numbers of Italian and German airmen were seconded from their respective air forces and provided aircraft from *Regia Aeronautica* and *Luftwaffe* inventories. One Yank merc, Vincent Joseph Patriarca, flying with the Blue Patrol, shared in blowing away two Loyalist aircraft before being shot down on 13 September 1936. Cap-

tured after bailing out, Patriarca survived the Spanish civil war to fly with the Italian *Regia Aeronautica* against the British RAF in North Africa during WWII. He had earlier flown with the Italians against Ethiopia in 1935 and 1936. Another American claiming to have flown for Franco was Charles Stehlin of Brooklyn, son of Yank SOF Joseph C. Stehlin who fought under five flags and was an ace with eight victories during WWI. Charles Stehlin later went to Finland, one of 19 Yank air SOFs volunteering to fight against the Soviet invasion.

American adventurer Hilaire du Berrier, a former professional parachutist and barnstorm pilot, was captured by the Italian army after volunteering to fly for the Ethiopian air force. He offered to fly for Franco to restore the Spanish monarchy but was blackballed by Italian officers in charge of *Aviacion del Tercio* because of his activities in Ethiopia. Du Berrier then signed a contract to fly for the Loyalists.

Yank pilots in the Spanish Republican Air Force, commonly known as *Rojo Aviacion*, included Bertram B. Acosta, Gordon King Berry, Eugene R. Finick, Frederick Ives Lord and Edward A. Schneider, Jr., Breguet-19 bomber pilots; James W. M. Allison, Albert J. "Ajax" Baumler, Orrin D. Bell, Harold E. Dahl, Derek D. Dickinson, Hilaire du Berrier, Charles D. Koch, Benjamin D. Leider, Frank G. Tinker, Jr., James Lincoln Holt Peck and Paul E. Williams, fighter pilots; Samuel Brenner, coastal patrol pilot and gunner-

mechanic; Samuel L. "Steve" Dukduk, who reportedly flew with Andre Malraux's *Escadre Espana* before joining the Abraham Lincoln Battalion; Edwin Lyons (Liebovitz) and Joseph Rosmarin, transport pilots; Vincent Minor Schmidt, Marcel Bloch MB-210 night-bomber pilot; Edward L. Semons, "flying commissar" and rear gunner; and Arthur Shapiro (Vasnit), transport pilot.

James Allison is credited with downing a Heinkel He-51 biplane over the Jarama River before being wounded in action. Allison later flew in China as a pilot in the 14th Volunteer Bombardment Squadron, commanded by Vincent Minor Schmidt. Eugene Finick was shot down while flying an R-7 *Rasante* biplane bomber. Charles Koch is credited with downing two He-51s. Ben Leider, the "Flying Reporter" for the *New York Post*, is credited with downing two He-51s while flying a Polikarpov I-15 before being killed in action on 18 February 1937. Harold "Whitey" Dahl scored three victories and was shot down twice before being captured.

Frank G. Tinker was the only American pilot to reach confirmed ace status during the Spanish civil war. An Annapolis graduate and ex-USMC fighter pilot, he flew Soviet Polikarpov I-15 *Chato* biplanes and I-16 *Rata* monoplane fighters to score eight confirmed victories. Tinker blew away three Fiat CR-32s, three Heinkel He-51s and two Messerschmitt Me-109 fighter planes. He rejoined the U.S. Navy in 1939.

Legion recruiting posts in various western European cities. Because Spain's recruitment of foreign nationals outside its own territory could have become a sensitive issue, the campaign was conducted deviously. In Hamburg, the Spanish vice-consul signed up several hundred German recruits for "police duties" in North Africa: Most of them were unemployed workers in Germany's postwar depression and Prussian ex-officers seeking new outlets for their talents. Recruiting in other countries drew a curious assortment which included a black from New York, a Polish count, a Maltese, a morphine addict, a German double agent who had spied for France, a former member of Gabriele d'Annunzio's fascist *arditi*, a White Rus-

In mid-January 1939, Gen. Francisco Franco, at temporary observation post, watches advance of Gen. Juan de Yague's "Army of Africa," led by Legion Banderas, in drive toward Tarragona during Catalanian offensive. Photo: UPI



Yank SOF Albert "Ajax" Baumler is credited with 4½ confirmed victories in Spanish skies, including three Fiat CR-32s and one Heinkel He-51, an He-51 shared and a CR-32 probable. Following the Spanish civil war, Baumler signed a contract for Chennault's "Flying Tigers" but was too late to join it. He did, however, fly with its replacement, the USAAF 23rd Fighter Group, and downed five additional Japanese aircraft during dogfights in WWII.

Frederic Ives Lord became an air SOF at age 19, joining the British Royal Flying Corps in 1917. By November 1918, he was an RAF flight commander, having been credited with downing 14 enemy aircraft and one kite balloon. He then flew with the RAF in Russia in 1919 and 1920, having won the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and Bar; the French *Croix de Guerre*; the Russian Order of St. Anne, with swords and bow; and the Russian Order of St. Stanislaus, with swords and bow. A USAAC Reserve major, Lord was recruited for Republican Spain while serving as a flight instructor at Brooklyn's Floyd Bennett Field. In Spain, he flew on the Basque front. He ferried planes for the RAF during WWII and served briefly with the USAAF.

Orrin D. Bell flew Sopwith Camels during WWI and reportedly made a sudden transition to the Polikarpov I-16 *Rata* during the Spanish civil war. On his first combat mission in Spain, Bell claimed his combat patrol encountered 20 Fiat CR-32s of the *Aviacion del Tercio* and in the ensu-

ing dogfight he downed an enemy plane. He personally claimed six victories during the Spanish civil war, and his accounts were widely published in aviation journals.

Bell's claims, however, have been disputed. (Albert Baumler claimed Bell never sobered up enough to fly a combat mission in Spain.) Bell entered the U.S. Army on 7 March 1942 and was killed on active duty on 5 August 1943.

Capt. Derek D. Dickinson claimed that while commanding the *Esquadrilla Alas Rojas* (Red Wings), in August 1937 he engaged in a solitary air duel with Bruno Mussolini, Benito Mussolini's oldest son. Bruno Mussolini was allegedly commanding an *Aviacion del Tercio* squadron of Fiat G-50 monoplane fighters based at Palma de Majorca in the Mediterranean. The prearranged duel supposedly took place at 15,000 feet initially, before dropping down to 3,000 feet, and lasted for 20 minutes. Dickinson claimed to have flown a Polikarpov I-16 *Rata*. According to Dickinson, neither plane was downed but he claimed victory. Although Dickinson's story has been repeated numerous times in American aviation publications, the Italians declare that no such duel took place. Bruno Mussolini was a bomber pilot and, in August 1937, Italy had only two Fiat G-50 fighters, neither of which was in Spain. Italian records indicate that Bruno Mussolini flew 27 missions in Spain in a Savoia-Marchetti SM-79 bomber before returning home in March 1938. The Fiat G-50 did not arrive in Spain until January 1939.

When Hilaire du Berrier joined *Rojo Aviacion* for \$1,000 a month in November 1936, he was assigned as a fighter pilot in an obsolete Nieuport-Delage ND-52 sesquiplane, whose top speed was only 158mph. Du Berrier flew on several combat patrols prior to 29 November 1936, when he mistook an Air France Wibault trimotor transport for an enemy bomber. Fortunately for the passengers, du Berrier's gunsight malfunctioned. With its wing riddled by bullets, the Air France transport made an emergency landing at Alicante (it was enroute to Tangiers). Later, du Berrier crash-landed his ND-52 after its control cables malfunctioned, injuring both legs. On 11 December 1936, he was arrested for anti-communist activities and slated to die by firing squad. Commandante Alberto Bayo, who later trained Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, saved du Berrier by showing the execution would receive unfavorable publicity in the American press. Du Berrier then returned to France.

Top Soviet ace in Spain was A. K. Serov, credited with 16 kills. Russia supplied a total of 1,409 aircraft to *Rojo Aviacion* during the Spanish civil war, including 550 I-15 biplane fighters, 475 I-16 *Rata* monoplane fighters, 210 Tupolev SB-2 twin-engine bombers, and a lesser number of other types. More than 2,200 Soviet military officers and technicians were sent to Spain, including at least 772 airmen under command of Soviet Gen. Kamanin. For all practical purposes, Moscow's representatives directed the Spanish Republican war effort.

sian aristocrat and a sprinkling of Latin American revolutionists and exiles.

The Spanish Legion followed the example of its French counterpart in requiring no identification or credentials from its volunteers and permitting the use of pseudonyms. Anyone between the ages of 18 and 40, who was medically fit, was eligible for service, regardless of his background. Some concessions were made to foreign volunteers: For example, during marches they were allowed to sing, "Madelon," "Tipperary" or "Deutschland Uber Alles."

But from the beginning the Legion was essentially a Spanish organization. Foreigners accounted for only about one-fifth of the enlisted men, and all officers were Spanish until the civil war, when a few foreigners received commissions. Spaniards who enlisted during the Moroccan conflict represented diverse political groups, including nationalists, anarchists and even communists. Some selected convicts were pardoned as a reward for volunteering, and captured deserters from the regular Spanish army were also given an opportunity to redeem themselves in the Legion.

Millan Astray demanded that all legionnaires "forget." For their past beliefs and political allegiances he substituted the Credo of the Legion, 10 princi-

ples drawn up in collaboration with Francisco Franco. This core of the Legion's ideology blended concepts from the French Foreign Legion and the chivalric code, and it was embellished with values deriving from Spanish Catholicism. The French Legion offered regeneration through battlefield heroism. Millan Astray took this concept further: His Legion offered atonement and redemption for all past sins, through self-denial, suffering and death. To his men he constantly stressed the squalor and degeneracy of their past lives and the need for salvation through martyrdom. The burden of guilt could only be laid down in battle. As one of the Legion's hymns expressed it:

A painful calvary weighs on my heart,
Which seeks redemption in battle.

My emblem knows no fear...

My destiny is only to suffer.

Hardened in the crucible of the organization, the legionnaire was expected to meet the hardships and unforeseen disasters of his new life with stoicism and resignation. At the same time he was supposed to exhibit the military virtues of obedience, bravery and a "blind and fiercely combative spirit."

Religious ritual with militaristic trappings was evident not only in the mystique of the Legion but also in daily



TODAY'S SPANISH FOREIGN LEGION

by Maj. John S. Arvidson

A highly trained elite unit with a tradition of victory, today's Spanish Foreign Legion consists of three *Tercio* regiments, stationed in Ceuta, Melilla and the relatively peaceful Canary Islands. Although the precise figure is withheld by the Spanish state, it is estimated that the Legion is currently 7,200 strong, some 800 less than present enrollment in the French Foreign Legion.

Ceuta, Legion headquarters since 1920, is a Spanish enclave in North Africa and lies opposite Gibraltar. A total of 10,000 Spanish troops, comprised primarily of the Legion and two *Regulare* regiments, garrison the city and safeguard the outlying hills. At Melilla, the Spanish army garrison numbers 8,000 and is commanded by Gen. Luis Polanco, who also serves as civil governor. This North African enclave, approximately 140 miles east of Ceuta, lies across the Mediterranean from Almeria, Spain.

The *Tercio* regiment in Melilla, similar to those stationed at Ceuta and in the Canaries, consists of a regimental headquarters company, a heavy-mortar company armed with ECIA 120-L 120mm mortars, other

regimental units and three infantry battalions. Each *Tercio* battalion includes a battalion headquarters company, a support company and three rifle companies. Spanish Foreign Legion battalions are referred to as *banderas*, each having its distinctive *bandera* (banner) color. Unit tradition in the Legion is built primarily around the *bandera*, rather than along regimental lines.

Backing up the Legion in Ceuta, Melilla and the Canaries are the Spanish marines, an elite corps of 10,000 men, well-versed in amphibious warfare. Spanish legionnaires and marines conduct combined training operations, utilizing helicopters and landing craft. The marines are organized into four light-infantry regiments and two independent combat groups. They are also stationed in the Balearic Islands.

In both Ceuta and Melilla, *Tercio* and *Regulare* regiments are supported by an artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, an armored-cavalry battalion equipped with U.S. M41 light tanks and French AML armored cars and an army special sea company which gives limited amphibious capability to Legion units. In the past, the Legion has resorted to the use of fishing trawlers in combat amphibious operations.

The Legion was activated on 4 Sep-

tember 1920. Initially established at regimental strength, the Legion consisted of three battalions or *banderas*.

Each *bandera* consisted of approximately 600 officers and men subdivided into three rifle companies and a machine-gun company, basically the same as today's *bandera*. The standard rifle was the 7mm Mauser five-round bolt-action rifle. This weapon was later replaced by the German Mauser KAR 98. Subsequently the excellent CETME 58 replaced the KAR 98. Following the NATO trend, the 7.62mm CETME 58 is slated for replacement by the 5.56mm CETME Model L.

The battalion color of each *bandera* evokes an episode, person or symbol famous in Spanish history. The symbol of Maj. Franco's First *Bandera* is that of the wild boars of the House of Burgundy. Franco adopted this symbol as his personal pennant. Other *bandera* emblems include the double eagle of the House of Hapsburg, lineage of Charles V and Philip II; the figure of Christ with the image of Our Lady and the coat of arms of the Duke of Alba.

At Legion headquarters in Ceuta, volunteers for *El Tercio* are screened, briefed and examined. In many respects, they resemble French Foreign Legion volunteers, except more Spaniards join than other Europeans.

"Caballeros Legionarios" assault Rif stronghold. Rifles are Model 1893 7mm Mausers. During Moroccan campaign of 1920-26, Spanish Foreign Legion fought in 845 engagements. Photo: UPI



routine. Masses were celebrated by a priest who was flanked by legionnaires presenting arms throughout the service. Rising and kneeling were accompanied by bugle calls.

Unlike the French Legion, the Spanish organization was infused with nationalism. Its battle cry in combat was "Long live Spain, long live the King, long live the Legion!" Millan Astray instilled in many of his soldiers a sense of patriotism and devotion to fatherland; they were the elite warriors of Spain's colonial army, creating an African empire for the nation. Their commander believed that even Spanish anarchists and communists, despite their long fall from grace, could be redeemed in the Legion and convinced of its mission.

To instill patriotism in foreigners was certainly more difficult. It was not until after World War II that three years of service in the Legion enabled foreign volunteers to qualify for Spanish citizenship. The Spanish Legion, however, also

Continued on page 68

After thorough briefings, candidates are given the chance to quit if they so desire. If a candidate passes the medical exam, he is enlisted for three or five years. All officers in the Spanish Foreign Legion are volunteers.

Training is intensive and discipline is strict. Mental and physical conditioning is conducted concurrently with fundamental military training. Col. Astray gave the Spanish legionnaires a distinctive uniform. Their caps were specially designed and had a small red tassel. They wore short-sleeved shirts, open at the collar. Their breeches were like jodhpurs and they wore gauntleted gloves and white-lined capes with a fur collar and hood for cold nights. Webbing straps and belts were used instead of the leather ones of the rest of the Spanish army. Beards, sideburns and moustaches were approved as long as they looked neat.

Occasionally, direct commissions are granted to outstanding foreign volunteers. This was first done during the Spanish civil war in 1936, when Gilbert Nangle and Noel Fitzpatrick, both outstanding SOFs and ex-officers of the regular British army, were commissioned as lieutenants and later promoted to captains.

During his 1920-1923 command of the Legion, Col. Astray successfully inculcated his men with a contempt

for death through his slogan of *Viva la muerte!* (Long Live Death). Astray himself was a living symbol of fearlessness. After retirement in Argentina, Gen. Astray returned to service during the Spanish civil war. He died in 1954.

The most important slogan Astray introduced to the Legion was *A mi la Legion* (The Legion to my aid), which imbued the feeling of comradeship and teamwork, especially important in combat operations.

Another slogan advocated by Astray and adopted by *El Tercio* was "Down With Intelligence!" Psychologically, it goes hand-in-glove with *viva la muerte!*

For those interested in joining the Spanish Foreign Legion, SOF contacted the Spanish Embassy in Washington to find out more about rules and regulations pertaining to enlistment qualifications for the foreign volunteer:

Age: from 16 years old (if he turns 17 within enlisting year) to 35 years old.

Height: Minimum of 5'4".

Marital Status: Single, separated, divorced or widowed without children.

Documents Needed: Passport or any other identification document. If none available, the applicant should make a sworn statement about him-

self. If under 18 years of age, he must present the necessary consent of parent or guardian, duly legalized.

To enroll, the applicant has only to approach a military or government building, police station or civil guard station at any port, airport or city within Spanish national territory or its islands.

The applicant has no right to legally complain should he be rejected because of physical or any other impediments.

Commitment: Initial pledge is for a minimum of three years, but it can be done for four or five years. Reenlistments are for one year.

Promotions: These can be accomplished by completing the conditions and successfully finishing the necessary courses. To be an officer, one must first become a Spanish citizen. This can be done by observing good behavior. The highest rank to which one can be promoted as a legionnaire is that of major.

SOF readers desiring further particulars about current Spanish Foreign Legion regulations may write:

Centro Superior de Informacion de la Defensa

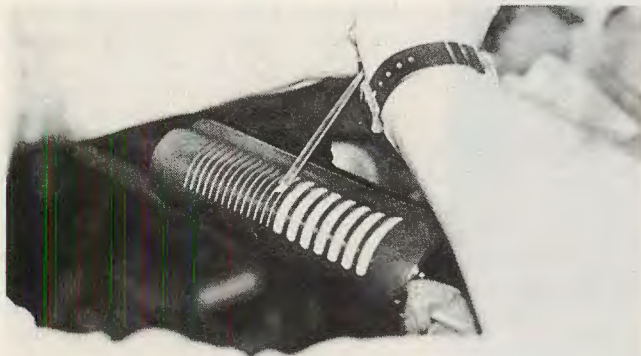
MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA

Alcala 53,
Madrid, SPAIN.

Inquiries are preferred in Spanish. Replies are not guaranteed.

870 KISS MODIFICATIONS

Text & Photos by Ken Hackathorn



Making A Good Gun Better

Armorer John Miller uses ¼-inch wood chisel to cut grooves in handguard of 870 Remington to ensure secure gripping surface.



Jam curer: Hold 870 upside down and insert car key through slot in follower to push trapped cartridge back into magazine tube.



Modified Model 870 Remington shell follower has slot — so that pocket knife or other tool can be inserted to push cartridge back into magazine tube.

SINCE the Remington 870 is the shotgun most widely used by police departments, it is only natural that it should become the most popular combat shotgun in private hands and, consequently, the most messed-with shotgun in America. In spite of the commercial proliferation of magazine extensions, stock-mounted shell holders and folding stocks, I remain a staunch proponent of the KISS modification system. That is: Keep It Simple, Stupid.

The gun I recommend is the standard Model 870 police riot gun with 18-inch plain barrel. Slug sights are not really needed, since the fighting shotgun's key role is with buckshot loads at ranges of less than 35 meters. Any decent shot can connect at this range with slugs, using the basic bead sight.

The sight modification that I do recommend is the replacement of the stock bead sight with a Nite-Site. The Nite-Site (available from Nite-Site, Inc., Dept. SOF, P.O. Box O, Rosemount, MN 55068) is a simple front sight that is rugged and installs easily. It provides a blaze-orange dot in daylight, and a luminous dot that glows in the dark. It requires neither batteries nor recharging. Remember, the shotgun may play a star role in limited-light operations, and for less than \$35, you can purchase and install the Nite-Site on your weapons and have the best combat sights available.

A solid grip on the fore-end is necessary for positive cycling of the pump-action repeater. Most failures to operate the pump shotgun result from an operator error called "short-stroking," often

caused by the shooter's hand slipping off the fore-end during the pump cycle.

The gunsmith needs only a ¼-inch wood gouge, skill and patience. Using the fine grooves on the handguard as guides, cut every other line with the chisel and make a broad, shallow groove, being careful to stay within the lines of the original grooves. Cut a little more wood with each pass until there is a recess about 3/10-inch deep. Be careful not to chip out the edges by going too fast. Use sandpaper wrapped around the edge of a file to smooth the recesses. Touch up the exposed wood with linseed oil. The result: a secure gripping surface.

The final modification is the most critical. If, in loading, the cartridge base is not pushed beyond the shell latch, the shell will pop back inside the follower, jamming the gun. If there is a round in



To modify 870 shell follower, first drill holes. Then use Dremel tool (shown here) with cut-off wheel to connect holes and form slot.

the chamber, you still have one shot to use. But the gun will not chamber more rounds until the fouled round is cleared. In order to remove the trapped round from under the follower, it is usually necessary to disassemble the trigger housing from the action. That may not be convenient in a gunfight.

This jam is encouraged when students are taught to load the weapon from underneath while holding the shotgun in the normal firing attitude. The system may work in the calm atmosphere of the firing range, but on the street when forced to load on the run, or behind a radio car in the pouring rain, with wet, slippery hands, the reloading technique that seemed so easy on the range may become a magic act. A better system is to flip the 870 over on its side, load with

the strong hand and watch what you are doing. It takes only a second longer, and it is easier to do right. With the other system, shells get dropped on the ground, lost in the dark and jammed under the follower because they were not securely latched in the magazine.

But we have a third modification for the 870. When I first came up with this cut, called the H-slot, many observers considered it worthless. Now, with added interest in combat shotgun work, the idea is catching on.

First, remove the trigger housing from the receiver. With a set punch carefully center two marks in the middle of the follower about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the front and the other about 1-1/8 inches from the rear. Drill a 7/32-inch hole in each location. Next, with a carbide cutter or

Dremel tool with cut-off wheel, connect the two holes with a slot down the middle of the follower.

After you cut the slot between the two holes, carefully deburr and polish both the inside and outside of the follower so the slot has no obstructions. If a shell slips back under the follower, insert your car keys or pocket knife through the slot in the follower and push the cartridge until it clicks behind the shell latch. Cycle the action, and get back into the fight. The sequence should take less than a few seconds.

All these modifications can be done in the armorer's shop, or be farmed out to a local gunsmith. Magazine extensions and large head safeties may be added if so desired. Leave the folding stocks to the gunshop commandos. ☒

AMTRAK AMBUSH

Routine Convoy Turns Nightmare in Vietnam

Text & Photos by William Kestell

ON the morning of 25 March 1968 — the day before my 23rd birthday — I found myself on Highway 1 on a road-clearing operation with 2nd Section, Recon Platoon, HHC 4/23rd Infantry of the 25th Division. We were heading out from Cu Chi, north to Trang Bang. It was our turn as point vehicle, but that was nothing to get excited about. Other operations like this had been milk runs. We'd get to Trang Bang before 1200 hours, and would lay over there until recalled to Cu Chi, or until a convoy came along, in which case we'd join it for the run up to Tay Ninh.

I had arrived in Vietnam in January and was first assigned as an M60 gunner on No. 38, "The Ugly American." Jeff, her regular driver, was due for R&R so, after a few weeks, he began breaking me in as relief driver. I liked being a gunner, but I knew I'd be a driver until a better assignment came along; besides, I wouldn't have to walk so much. When Jeff got back, I was transferred to No. 33, "Mellow Yellow."

"Mellow" was an old ACAV (M113-A1 armored personnel carrier), and nobody knew how she got her name. It wasn't what I would have called her, but I thought it was bad luck to change a name. It just isn't done. She had all sorts of little quirks, like spraying diesel fuel into the driver's compartment and using a couple of gallons of water a day. Maintenance had given up trying to find the leak. We had just given her new suspension, road wheels, drive and idler sprockets, so she would now do 50-plus

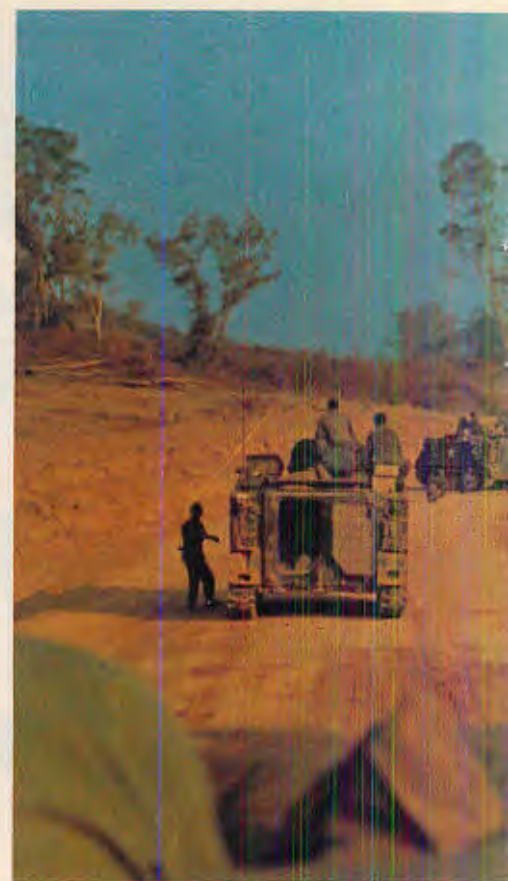
without a fuss. I simply got used to the little things and planned around them.

Our section that day consisted of four ACAVs, each with a crew of four: TC (track commander), driver, M60 gunner and rifleman. Old No. 33 and one of the other ACAVs had replaced the rifleman with a 90mm recoilless for added punch. A detachment of engineers operated with us, bringing an articulated scraper and a couple of dump trucks full of gravel to fill in any road damage we might find. We were 19 men in all.

We were about a mile or two south of Trang Bang when a call came over the radio. An American infantry company had come upon an enemy force of unknown size, and was chasing it. Our section leader made a fast check and found that we were in a perfect position to act as a blocking force when they broke from the woodline about 300-plus meters away. Between the jungle and the road was nothing but open paddy area, a beautiful killing zone with little or no cover. When the NVA hit that paddy, it would be a slaughter.

With four .50-calibers, four M60s, four M79s, two 90mms, our riflemen and the engineers, we could easily blunt any movement across that stretch of ground. We got the order to halt and the drivers pivoted the ACAVs 45 degrees right to a head-on position toward the expected enemy breakout point. Everyone except TCs and drivers dismounted and took up positions in the ditch in front of the vehicles.

Larry, who was M60 gunner, took



two boxes of ammo with him, and we tossed over three or four more just for good measure, giving him about 1,000 rounds. Lloyd had plenty of rounds for his 90mm — about 12 to 15 of HE (high explosive) and BEEHIVE mixed. The excitement mounted.

I went aft and brought up a few more boxes of .50-cal. so it would be handy, positioned my M79 and my ready rounds, and got in position as Dave swung the .50 out toward the jungle. All we could do now was wait.

At the edge of the woodline! Everyone tensed.

Then someone shouted, "Wait! Hold it! They're ARVNs!" It was a squad-sized unit, maybe a bit larger, moving out of the woodline, heading southwest. They were probably running ahead of the enemy, frequently the case with ARVNs. We waited and held our fire.

There they are. NVA! The .50s on all four ACAVs let go almost in one voice, but you could tell each TC by his special "signature," like a wireless operator. Howie on No. 38 fired his usual short-spaced, two-round bursts: Duda, Duda. Dave favored three-round groups: Duda, Duda, Duda!

The 60s joined in, firing long bursts. I heard Lloyd fire: WHOP — laying a HE round off at the edge of the woodline.

I saw more and more NVA break out and I began putting out HE rounds: Poomp, Crash! I fired only a couple before I noticed that Dave had nearly gone through the first box of rounds. I got another box ready to go. We had



ABOVE: The author stands beside "The Ugly American," M113 APC with Armored-Cavalry (ACAV) kit in January 1968.

LEFT: Mine blown in place by convoy of ACAVs led by M48A3 tank from 4th Bn., 23rd Infantry (mech.), 25th Infantry Division.

practiced doing this fast so, just as he was running the last rounds through the gun, I had the next box ready. The feed cover went up as I tossed the empty box over the front end and slammed the full one onto the tray. Dave grabbed the pig-tail of ammo which was hanging out and laid it in the receiver. Then he slammed down the feed cover with his left hand and yanked the charger with the other in a nearly simultaneous motion, and the gun let loose again.

Streams of tracers poured from every weapon on line. The fire was withering, but still the NVA came out of the jungle. We killed them, but more took their place. There was a sea of NVA, and I found it didn't pay to aim. Just load, point, shoot. Load, point, shoot! Poomp. Crash. Poomp. Crash.

I put out round after round. I stopped to reload Dave and then went back into action. I was going through rounds so fast that the barrel was getting hot; at this rate, my ready supply would soon be exhausted.

Bang. I felt a close concussion, and Dave rocketed out from behind the gun. What the hell? The ammo box sizzled and rounds cooked off! I looked at my left knee. I'm hit! It didn't hurt — it was more a warm, glowing sensation like a fire. A fire?

From down in the ditch, one of the medics yelled up, asking if I'd been hit too. Hit too? Dave. Damn straight, I'm hit. But I knew he wasn't going to come up to fix it. Well, I thought, if we are burning, I'm not going to stay up here

with several thousand rounds of .50 and 7.62mm down below.

I grabbed the M79, tossed it over the side and bailed out over the rear. Opening the small rear door, I went in to get the wooden 90mm packing case in which I carried my hoard of M79 rounds. I had been saving these for the last few weeks, ever since we had been put on allocations after our ammo dump went up during a rocket attack.

I tossed the case out the door, jumped out and dogged the door behind me. Whop! An RPG tore into No. 33. If I had been inside I could have said goodbye. I dropped prone. Where in the hell is that damn M79? I had been disoriented when I tossed it over the side — I found it directly in the line of fire, about six feet from the vehicle. I slithered out on my belly, got it and retreated to what little cover the tracks afforded. At least I wasn't out in the open and I had an unrestricted field of fire.

BRRRRRRP! The asphalt road in front of me exploded in a shower of fragments — and I couldn't see! Chunks of asphalt cut my face, and my lip was puffed up and bleeding. I scrunched back a little farther behind the tracks and finally managed to focus. If the NVA on the other end of that AK had used just a fraction more elevation, he'd have hit me.

The NVA numbers grew, despite the intensity of our fire. Poomp. Crash. Point, shoot. Get those rounds out.

Whop! Another RPG hit No. 33. She wouldn't need the 2½ pages of parts and

equipment to get her ready to pass inspection. I'd joked about losing the paperwork, since she probably would be junk before the stuff arrived. Suddenly the joke no longer seemed funny. One of the other ACAVs had been hit too, and was burning. RPGs flew behind us, in front as they fell short, and heavily to my right, all up and down the line. Both dump trucks had been hit and their gravel was strewn all over the road.

I heard the snap, snap of incoming overhead. Off to my right front, a head popped up every so often from behind a wall attached to a small hootch. I aimed and waited for the head to reappear. Poomp, Crash. Shit! Too high! I reloaded feverishly. The second round hit just below the lip, tearing out a big chunk of wall and part of the roof.

I blindly reached for another round. But now I had to feel around for the dwindling supply. I tried to pace my rate of fire, but then decided to shoot them all now, while the NVA were still far enough out for the warhead to arm.

The remaining rounds went in no time, except for two spares in my right-trouser pocket — just in case!

Just then I saw him, an NVA making a run from the hootch. I stood up and grabbed an M16 from the vehicle, threw off the safety to full-auto. BRRRRRRP. I emptied the magazine as the NVA vanished in a cloud of dust and lead. I ducked back, peered out a second later and saw nothing but a bundle of rags which moments before had been an enemy soldier.



ABOVE: M113-series armored personnel carriers (APC) were used widely by Army in Vietnam both as troop carriers and, with ACAV kits added, as assault vehicles.

RIGHT: Ordnance and equipment captured from NVA and Viet Cong by troops of 4th Bn., 23rd Infantry.



The three of us made our way south to join the rest of our dismounted troops. Our section leader told us to get to the far side of the road and head north toward Trang Bang. As I crawled up the bank, my knee hurt — and worse, it was stiff and would not bend. That meant that all I'd be able to do was walk across that open road. It would be suicide. Larry and Lloyd broke and ran across. They made it.

I stretched myself out and started rolling across. I stopped for just a second when I saw one of the engineers break from the ditch. He ran halfway across the road and turned toward the NVA. His M14 was dirty, so he had to cock it manually. He did this, fired once, and was cocking it again when a burst caught him. He spun around and hit the road, screaming and writhing in agony. It was horrible, but lasted only a few seconds. He lay still. I rolled even faster and reached the ditch almost immediately. We regrouped and started to get organized. Now was no time to panic.

Number 38 and the other functioning ACAV prepared to pull out and all the troops who could scrambled aboard. We were too far away, and there was simply no more room. Jeff threw her into gear, and tromped the accelerator. She leaped forward, the other following closely.

I remember looking up at "The Ugly American" as she tore by us. I could see my friends aboard and the looks on Jeff, Howie, T.J., Jack, Arty and Doc's faces.

There was no question of their stopping or even slowing for us. A sitting target could be hit many times in the space of a few seconds. I knew they hated to leave us. But our unit was going to be overrun and those who could live to fight another time would be foolish to throw their lives away on a gallant but hollow gesture. The engine sound faded as they escaped, RPGs following them.

I stopped and waited for Lloyd, Larry

and Dave. Poor Dave. He had been hit in the chest, close to the heart. Stripped to the waist, his lanky frame had been deeply tanned from nine months in-country. It now was a strange, yellowish color. Blood had completely soaked through the field dressing and caked his body, mixing with the dust. His dark, penetrating eyes now had a vague, glassy stare. He stumbled along, driven by the primeval instinct of survival. As he approached me, I put out my arm and tried to reassure him.

"Hang on, Dave. We'll make it; we'll get you out of here. Don't worry." He passed me, unaware of words, my presence or even my hand on his shoulder. It hurt me so deeply to see him like this. I felt closer to Dave than to Larry or Lloyd. He took me into the crew as driver on Jeff's say-so alone and there was a bond between us that I can't explain. Also, since I was the oldest in the crew, I felt responsible to see my people make it out together. I was less worried about Larry and Lloyd, who were not even scratched.

Dave passed me. I turned to fall in behind, to keep an eye on him.

Bang! A noise, louder than anything I ever heard before, all around me, inside of me. I slowly tumbled through the air, feeling as if I had just been hit on the right thigh by a baseball bat.

The noise stopped, but my ears rang.

Everything was fuzzy. I lay against the bank of the ditch, facing east. I noticed that my right leg lay crazily in my lap, blood soaking it. *Shit!* That is not where a knee is supposed to be.

I knew what had happened. I had been reamed out by our section leader for my habit of keeping a canvas ditty bag of M79 rounds next to the driver's hatch. He warned that someday the enemy would put a bullet up there and blow my head off. I knew that one lousy shell had hit the last couple of rounds I carried in my trouser pocket and set off the propellant. I lay there. Everyone stopped, looking at me. There was no feeling, just a contorted limb and blood everywhere. A faceless voice asked me if I could move. No chance.

I shouted back, "Hell, no! Get the hell out of here!" I figured they couldn't possibly carry me. I knew the worst had happened. It was arterial bleeding, and within 30 to 90 seconds it would all be over. I waved them away and began making an Act of Contrition, as those behind stepped over me and moved on.

With so few able-bodied men and so little ammunition, no one suggested forming a defensive perimeter: Even more would die needlessly. As the last man grew smaller, I knew what "Alone" meant. I was alone, wounded, without medical aid, water or weapons — and surrounded by enemy.

I tried to get more comfortable by shifting my weight. Oh, God, it hurt. I tried to move my right leg with my hands, just a little. The pain lanced like a hot knife. I wouldn't try again. I thought surely by now I should be feeling lightheaded, but there was no such sensation. It dawned on me that I might not be dying. Not yet anyway.

That was small comfort, however, because my situation was not any better overall. I might not have a severed artery, but how long could I last? I carefully took my wallet from my back pocket and thumbed through it, holding all my remaining worldly possessions in my hand. Pictures of a girl I loved very much and wanted to marry when I got home. I hoped the hurt she would feel wouldn't last too long. When you're alone, you have lots of time to think.

I thought about my folks. Dad — well, I guess he'd rightly be my stepfather, but I never considered him that. He had always treated me like his own. Mom was widowed on 16 March 1945, just a few days before I was born. My natural father had been with the Air Force in the CBI (China-Burma-India) Theater, flying transports from Burma into China. He took a buddy's flight that day and his C-46 crashed.

It would be bad for the folks. The usual telegram saying only that your son is dead. I thought of the irony — the closeness of the dates, the closeness of the theaters — it was uncanny. My brothers and sister. My youngest brother was only 5 when I shipped out. Would he remember me as he grew into adolescence and manhood? Or would I just be a picture on the mantel? My other brother and sister were older and, while I loved them all, Hopper was special to me. I thought about Art, four years younger than I. He was stationed at Fort Knox. If I were killed, would he be sent over? Did the Army make allowances for the death of a brother?

I really felt hurt, deep inside. I was being cheated out of so much that lay ahead. It wasn't fair!

Then I got hold of myself. If anyone is to blame for this, I thought, it's me and nobody else. I was the one who wanted to find out what war was like. I was the one who volunteered.

I had always had a thing about this war. I joined up six months before graduation. After spending a couple of weeks at home, I went in. I didn't want to be drafted. I believed that we should be in Vietnam.

I left the wallet lying on my chest and closed my eyes. The fighting quieted down, except for sporadic small-arms fire and the ammo on No. 33 which was still cooking off. I looked at my watch. We had engaged the enemy between 0700 and 0730. It was now about 0900. I couldn't believe it was that early and that I was still alive.



NVA dead on road to Trang Bang.

I decided that I had better get organized and take stock of my condition. Wounded, left knee, not serious. Wounded, right side of chest. When the hell did that happen? I noticed a bulge in my right-trouser pocket. I gingerly reached inside: two complete M79 rounds. They hadn't gone off. What the hell hit me? By God, I still had a chance to get out of here. I took a fresh pack of Pall Malls from my shirt pocket and fumbled for some C-ration matches. There. *Shit*, they were soaking wet. I threw the pack into the ditch.

Voices: the singsong drivel that never made any sense to me. Would the unthinkable happen — would I become a POW? I'd rather die than be taken. If they got me, I knew I'd probably die in captivity — but slowly, not quickly and cleanly. I was paralyzed.

I wished I had a grenade. Then I wouldn't let them take me; I'd pull the pin and wait until they got close. I snapped back to reality. They were out there, coming closer: looking for souvenirs and prisoners and taking a body count, just as we would. I scrunched down further into my flak jacket and lowered my steel pot to cover as much of my face as possible. Maybe I could play dead. If they were in a hurry, it might fool them.

They Reached Down And Grabbed My Wallet

The pitch of the voices rose. They saw me. They moved toward me quickly. A hand reached down and grabbed the wallet from my chest. Go ahead you bastard. They were excited. All sorts of good stuff! My ID, personal papers, pictures, letter from home I hadn't thrown away and about \$150 in MPC (military pay currency). A good haul. One grabbed for my wrist watch. I relaxed my arm and hand so it would slide off easily. If not, I was afraid they'd cut it off. I had paid only about \$5 for it.

Then they began moving off to the south, climbing up out of the ditch. I shifted my eyes just a bit and could see them. ARVNs. I swore at them at the top of my lungs. They wore bright green uniforms, netting on their helmets, shoulder patches and carried American weapons. There were about five. At least one had a BAR and the others carbines and M1s. They turned and looked at me — right at me — but I didn't care. I kept swearing at them about coming all this way to fight in their stinking country, and this is the thanks I get. I was so damned mad I'd have killed them if I'd been able to. They looked at each other, back at me and just walked away.

I was jolted back to reality by the whine of incoming artillery. At first there were a few, spaced rounds. Then it changed into rolling thunder. Finally, after our fight was over, we were getting artillery support. I was excited, hoping there were still NVA out there in the clear getting blown to pieces. Then, a terrible thought. Here I am in this ditch. What if a big hot shell burrows into the ground near me, no sound, just a searing, white flash! There was no place to hide, no cover — only the hope that it wouldn't happen.

Then the firing stopped and it was quiet again. In the distance, another sound — choppers. I could hear the rotor pop getting steadily louder. As they flew closer, it was apparent they were not bringing reinforcements — they were gunships. They began rolling in, firing rockets and strafing whatever was still out there. Again, my cheering stopped — what if they hit my position by accident? Or worse — if I moved, would they think I was part of the NVA unit? I froze. Close by, heavy machine guns opened up. I thought it was a relief force, but then I noticed that they only fired when the choppers were making their runs — it was the enemy.

More voices! Now what? They approached cautiously, a couple of riflemen and a medic. The medic came close and reached for my right leg. Hey, no way, I thought. I pushed his hand away. No damn ARVN was going to lay a hand on me while I was alive!

Snap, Snap, Zip, Ping! Small-arms fire came in — not heavy, but the ARVNs vanished as if they had never been there.

It was getting late. The sun was now well to my back. God, I was thirsty. I hoped I wouldn't remain here all night. Then I heard a sound from the north.

It was ACAVs, no doubt about it. I kept searching the northern edge of the road for the first sign of a relief force. The sound grew louder with each passing minute. There! There they are!

I yelled at the top of my lungs, but it was more mental wish than physical ex-

Continued on page 62

PART 1: *The merchant marine is made up of neither merchants nor marines but it certainly represents one of the oldest and most steadily employed classes of men who confront danger for money. In the modern merchant marine, ranks are modeled on the navy, but then again, the navy may have originally been modeled on these ancient sea rovers. Pay is higher than in the navy, crews are smaller, contracts shorter, food better and service more diverse.*

This all sounds easy and profitable. It can be lucrative, but work in the merchant marine is rarely easy. Each man does the work of several naval sailors, and most who do well and serve long are highly trained specialists. The first step in qualification as a real merchant sailor is the coveted "Z-card."

Nearly impossible to obtain without connections or prior naval service, the Z-card is the merchant seaman's ticket to adventure and profit, but it is only basic admission to the profession. To advance and guarantee employment, the sailor needs to acquire other qualifications, diplomas and certifications, but the Z-card virtually guarantees admission to the many schools and programs for the able and ambitious sailor.

PART 2: *Prospective American sailors can learn seamanship on the United States' river, lake and inland waterways, either by on-the-job training with local tow-boat or tug-boat fleets or by attending the National River Academy. America's offshore oil industry also offers many job opportunities. Pay on American-flag ships is excellent as are ship-board living conditions, and the American sailor's perquisites include medical, vacation, life insurance and retirement plans.*

For the mariner on the beach, local seamen's clubs, such as the Seaman's Church Institute of New York or the international United Seaman's Service, have facilities that range from rooms and restaurants to employment information. Finally, seamen's stores and maritime-service groups provide necessities and luxuries on land and at sea.

MOST nations with a sea coast have a merchant marine, but even some inland countries, such as Switzerland, have ships under their flags. Usually ships' officers must be nationals of the flag they fly: The captain and radio officer of British ships must be from the United Kingdom; all officers on U.S. vessels must be American citizens; the crew and all officers on Soviet and Eastern-bloc vessels must be citizens of their countries. There are a few exceptions, however, in which citizens of any nation may be officers of vessels under different flags.

In the '30s, "flags of convenience" (to the ship owner trying to avoid taxes) and "runaway flags" (to the seaman who is out of a job) developed. These



by William P. Mote

are the so-called PanLibHon fleets: Panama, Liberia and Honduras. These small nations still have extremely light tax burdens and low registry fees for ship owners who register their vessels under PanLibHon flags. In the past, required inspections of the vessels were lax, wages were low and contracts, as such, either were in the owner's favor or nonexistent. A man willing to sail on some rust-bucket in order to skip an out-of-the-way Caribbean port often didn't worry about pay — he was more concerned about how close the cops were. Times have changed: Today the governments of both Panama and Liberia are trying to improve the image of their merchant marine. New, stiff rules for licensing have been enacted by the Liberian government. Panama has begun to inspect vessels much more thoroughly.

Foreign-flag ships may be part of multi-national corporations or local fleets of one or more vessels. The smaller outfits can offer the mercenary seaman a variety of adventures. Opportunities in the larger firms are more like those in American lines, discussed last month.

The big outfits include the major oil

Floating ammo can SS American Ranger carries hardware to Germany for NATO. Photo: Skyfotos

companies. Esso/Exxon has a large foreign fleet under at least half a dozen flags. Tradax, with offices in Switzerland, has many ships in the grain trade. Sanyo of Japan operates Liberian flag tankers. Other large firms are Zim of Israel and numerous cruise-ship operators based in Miami.

To get to work on these, as well as in smaller companies, the prospective seaman or officer must have papers in the grade he wishes to sail, from the country to which the ship is registered. Today, both Liberia and Panama require that the sailor have a letter of commitment for a ship under its flag before it will issue documents. For an officer, a foreign license will be issued grade for grade only. Liberia requires a test as well. The days of walking into a consulate and paying a "fee" to get a license above the grade of American papers held are now past. Liberia issues a diploma-style license; Panama issues the more traditional "book."

SEE THE WORLD WITH PAN/LIB/HON

Part 3: Hints & Hazards of Sailing Under Foreign Flag



MUTINY ON THE *EVERGREEN*

Sailing under foreign flag may lead to adventure, as Bill Mote writes, but Amos Hecht, captain of the Panamanian freighter, *Evergreen*, dislikes being cast as this year's Capt. Bligh in a mutiny in which First Officer Dajit Suberoi, 42, of Jullundur, India, was stabbed to death and tossed overboard into the Gulf of Mexico in the early morning of 15 May.

U.S. Coast Guard authorities disclosed that five men allegedly were involved in a scheme to kill eight of the ship's officers and crew. On reaching the mouth of the Mississippi River, Hecht, an Israeli national, radioed for Coast Guard help, and an 11-member team of federal special-weapons agents boarded the freighter. The captain and his crew had ended the mutiny before the boarding party reached the ship.

When the *Evergreen* sailed from New Orleans to Houston one day la-

ter, the suspects were being held in the brig by two private guards, hired by the ship's agents, Gulf and Eastern Steamship and Chartering Corp.

FBI spokesman Russ Anderson explained that the five could not be arrested in New Orleans because the slaying had occurred in international waters and therefore no U.S. law had been broken. Furthermore, the ship was not under U.S. flag and there were no U.S. citizens aboard.

The Panamanian government has claimed jurisdiction over the five suspected mutineers, and Carmen Crespo de Pinzon, Panama's consul general in Houston, asked for U.S. assistance in returning them to Panama for trial.

The *Evergreen* originally sailed from Italy. After a 30-hour trip from New Orleans, the ship reached Houston on Monday, 17 May 1982, where stevedores began unloading its cargo of 13,000 tons of steel pipe.

—M.L. Jones

Once he has his papers, if he wants to go the big company route, the seaman must fill in an application for employment with the company desired. National shipping firms which hire foreign nationals include South African Marine Corporation and Nigerline of Nigeria. From the company to which he applies, the sailor will receive a list of ships, runs, pay scales and vacation information. Sometimes papers for the parent country can be obtained after a year or more of service.

The runs are worthwhile. The majority of these ships are fairly new. The pay is good, based on world income, but well below U.S. union wages. There are no unions, but on Greek-flag ships, the seaman may have to pay a small part of his wages to the Greek social-security system — collectible at retirement age, for foreigners as well as citizens who have sailed on Greek ships.

Other benefits vary. Food on the big multi-national-owned ships is good, plentiful and healthful, but there is usually only one entree per meal, which can be a let-down to someone used to American menus. Although *American-*

flag ships rarely allow officers' families aboard, most foreign-flag operations permit officers to have wives or girl friends aboard for part of the year. Few foreign-flag operators have retirement programs as we know them, and medical insurance may consist only of whatever medical aid is available through the public-health program of those countries the ship visits.



Passenger ferry crosses Homer's Sea toward Turkey (ancient Smyrna). Photo: W.P. Mote

For the mercenary who wants to ship out, smaller foreign-flag companies may be preferable. If you are a sailor who is willing to sail on anything, carrying any cargo (including refugees or illegal aliens), who can survive on weird food, who is willing to work 18-plus hours a day for \$1,000 a month, and who considers it perfectly normal for the captain to hold small-arms practice on the aft hatch a couple of afternoons a week, these smaller cargo and passenger ships may be for you. Most are entirely legal and legitimate. Others are engaged in various acts of hanky-panky that range from carrying drugs to ELINT activities. Some of these umpteen-year-old freighters, whose electronics cabinets can pinpoint their location to within 60 yards anywhere and whose bridges have a copy, well-dog-eared, of *Jane's Fighting Ships of the World* have interesting voyages.

But they all require the *papers*. So the sailor generally needs the U.S. Z-card for openers as well as papers for the flag he is to sail under. The ship owner, or his representative, will generally supply these. Foreign-flag operators usually ask few questions, and if a sailor gives a general description of where he has sailed before, it is usually enough. But here again, experience is desirable.

How do you find available jobs? Through recruitment. Unlike union or U.S.-flag oil-company jobs, which have dozens of applicants for any opening, these employers are always seeking new manpower — but they don't advertise in the Sunday papers. You have to look at bulletin boards at mariner's clubs and learn at what bars scuttlebutt is passed and where you can find local "shipping masters." Most clubs have some sort of notice board where jobs are posted. The

Prince of Wales' Seamen's Club run by the Royal Bombay Seaman's Society has openings posted on a daily basis for a dozen or more officers.

Recruitment pitches can come at the oddest times and strangest places. Once I was asked to take a radio job on a British-owned, Hong Kong-flag freighter. The captain was a Scot; his chief engineer was from India; the crew came from all over Southeast Asia. Pay was \$800 a month, all the free Scotch whiskey I wanted and a small bit of cargo space for my own account. I got this offer in the old 007 Room at the Beach luxury hotel in Karachi. The man was serious; I was tempted — but under contract at the time — I had to let it go. Another time a Greek captain tracked me down in New York. He was desperate enough to offer to supply a girl friend if I made the trip. That one I signed on for.

Certain bars, in most port cities, are good sources: The Kangaroo Club in Singapore is one of the best; Pat & Judy have many friends in the oil-rig and supply-boat force. The Malamute in old San Juan is the place to check on inter-island shipping, but sail experience is desirable as some work is still being done by schooners. For the man with few responsibilities, running an LSM on an African river can be fun.

Major ports, such as New York and New Orleans, still have "shipping masters," who keep files of contact information on sea personnel of different grades. The smaller companies often ask them to provide individuals or even entire crews. Unlike the shore employment office, no fee is charged the seaman; the ship owner pays the freight.

If They Miss Two Payrolls, Get Out!

Many of these small-company ship owners do not like to hire Americans, especially Yanks who have sailed for unions. Their reasoning — and rightly so — is that we won't stay if the conditions are bad. They don't realize that the well-trained, adventurous seaman will put up with hectic conditions if the pay is there on time. This leads to some important advice: When they miss the second payroll date, *QUIT!* When in doubt, get out fast. Most of these operations run on a shoestring, and when the creditors are nipping at his heels, sailors are the last to get the owner's money.



English gardening decorates Spanish stucco at entry to Hamilton Seamen's Club, Bermuda. Photo: W. P. Mote

Length of service on the contracts is often open. On paper, you may sign for two years but both you and the owner know your service will not run that long. The owner wants a long-term crew. The seaman wants to make his money and move on. The usual kicker is the flight home. Often the owner and seaman can agree if the sailor offers to pay his own repatriation after, say, six months, rather than have the owner pay for it after two years. The owner can almost always find another person to fill the job — and he saves the air fare.

Owners usually agree to this sort of deal because otherwise the seaman who is dissatisfied can get "sick" and go home at company expense.

Wages range from good to lousy. Some of the cruise ships in the Caribbean have Korean messmen and waiters working for the equivalent of \$50 (U.S.) a month! This is, of course, an extreme case. Deck-seamen jobs under foreign flag and independent owners — i.e., the one-ship companies — might pay between \$300 and \$500 a month. Maybe more. Maybe less. Officers make more, of course. A third mate or radio operator might clear between \$600 and \$1,500. A higher rate would go to a man who has dual licenses and is willing to do two jobs. He would stand a bridge watch and, when messages had to be sent or received, work in the radio room. Naturally the required eight hours of listening as well as 16 of automatic alarm coverage, suffers under this system.

Quarters are usually adequate, even pleasant. Since crews are made up of a hodgepodge of nationalities, conversations can be interesting. Expect odd moments — like having a cook come to the bridge to ask the direction to Mecca, so he can pray, or seeing an Indian standing on his head, back aft, practicing yoga. Mixed crews take good care of their quarters which, since not covered by the strict U.S. Coast Guard construc-



First to sail against the wind, antediluvian dhows carried Arab trade to India, still

dominate mid-east coastal trade in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Photo: W. P. Mote

WHISPERING DEATH by Donovan "China" Smith

Life Magazine called it "Whispering Death." I was on the reefer ship, S.S. *Junior*, docked in the port of Saigon on the morning of 22 August 1968. It was 5:25 a.m. when "Victor Charley" zeroed in on the port and Tu-Do's area of bars, swank hotels and bazaars.

We were unloading around the clock. The deck was lit up with flood lights as were the wide-open hatches. Inside Vietnamese longshoremen sweated as they loaded cases of fruit and vegetables on pallets which were then hoisted to the dock before transportation to the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps.

I had been out drinking and whoring around Tu-Do the evening before and was sleeping it off when the first rocket hit. *Veroom!* I rolled off my rack and my shoulder hit the deck just as a second rocket exploded aft. *Veroom!* I was curled up next to the bulkhead when the third rocket bracketed the ship.

Veroom! Shrapnel pinged off the house and sprayed the deck.

"Off the deck! Off the fucking deck," the armed guard kept shouting. Vietnamese workers poured out of the hole. The deck was a bedlam. As the lights were killed, everything disappeared in blackness. *Veroom! Veroom! Veroom!* The rockets were coming in groups of three. But we were no longer the target, because Charley had moved the launcher a cunt hair lower.

My head hurt like hell and I felt a buzz saw running in my left ear drum as I got to my feet. I looked out over Saigon's port. It was in flames. MPs were closing gates, bells were ringing and sirens were sounding everywhere. Fifteen rockets had dropped onto the port area. Now Tu-Do Street was catching hell. (The Continental Palace or Caravelle was hit that night — but I forget which one.)

All longshore work had stopped and it didn't start up again until mid-morning. Luckily for us, we had not received a direct hit or the Bach Dang River would have had apples, oranges, peaches and grapes by the case, bobbing all the way down to Vung Tau.

Twenty rockets in all fell on Tu-Do Street, 15 on the port area. The first three, aimed at the S.S. *Junior*, fell a few feet short. It was the second time Charley had rocketed Saigon.

Me? I was just another old ex-Army WWII retread doing my bit to keep a young trooper in the field, as were many of the unsung old men who manned the U.S. merchant fleet that transported everything from Kotex® to ammo and jet fuel, on the longest military sealift the world had ever seen. No Purple Hearts for the merchant marine.

I went back to the West Coast, had my "T.S." slip punched in San Francisco and shipped out on an ammo ship headed for Da Nang. But I will never forget that morning — the concussion I received still makes that buzz saw ring in my middle ear drum.

tion rules, may have real wood on the walls and carpet instead of tile.

Color TV and video games are certainly not limited to American ships, and I've seen tape decks on the bridge of several foreign ships. Although it would be a gross violation of American rules, short-order cooking does take place in the wheel houses of some foreign ships. You'll find that the nature and extent of such conditions will vary among ships, owners and individual captains.

Food, especially on one-ship-company vessels, varies. If the owner is Jewish or Arabian, forget pork. An Indian owner may expect his foreign crews to live on vegetable curries. On most foreign ships, rice plays an important part, and food is usually limited in quantity as well as variety. Again, it is the cook who keeps everyone happy — or has them ready to jump ship at the earliest chance.

Although the majority of small ships, and even larger ones owned by a one- or two-ship company, are strictly above-board, on some runs cargos can change suddenly. Crates marked "pig-iron" may require extremely gentle handling. Transfers of cargo at sea may take place, and ports like Port Said and Aden usually have a ship or two at anchor whose paint is still dripping because the name and port of registry have been changed overnight — sometimes legally. Such changes can and do occur suddenly, and it is the wise man who, when under foreign flag, carries \$1,000 in traveler's checks or an American Express card with which to extract himself, should the need arise.

Protection — there is none. When under foreign flag, there is no union to cry to if you are overworked or underpaid or if the food is bad. The Panamanian or Liberian consul really can't help you and the American consul, since you are not working for an American company, wants little to do with you.

One advantage, however, is that your employer, unless a big multi-national, usually does not report your earnings to the Internal Revenue Service and certainly does not hold out tax money. What you earn is what you keep.

You can use a *nom de mer* if you want to hide your identity and you probably can get papers in a false name. Once that is done, your next step would be to become a dual-national. Nicaragua, once a passport mill, has become indifferent, if not downright hostile, to Americans trying that route. The ultimate is a Swiss refugee passport, and staying on a ship for years as did the old-time seamen of Dana's day. So we have come full circle.

For the mercenary between combat contracts, the professional adventurer, the young person looking for a good career — and even the staid businessman who is ready to "cut out" — going to sea has much to offer. ☘

BUDDHA ON THE DZ

SOF Staffers Jump With
Royal Thai Air Force

by Jim Morris





OUR first clue that all was not wonderful came when somebody said, "Helmet," and I realized neither Coyne nor I had one. We were in a hotel coffee shop in Hatyai (or Hadyai, Haadyai or Haatyai, Thailand, depending on which sign you read). The restaurant had been done in a Spanish motif. Under an awning in a white Moorish arcade parachutists sat around us in a strange assortment of gear: uniforms, sky-diver suits, coveralls, jogging outfits.

SOFer Jim Coyne and I wore tiger suits, which are sometimes our work clothes. Since we were going to be jumping MC 1-Js out of a Royal Thai Air Force C-123, we had this classified in our own minds as a troop jump, and the helmet is an essential item of issue.

Coyne was deep in breakfast-table conversation.

I immediately got up and went to the next table: "Anybody got an extra helmet?" Col. George Goetzke, chief of the Army division at JUSMAG-Thai (Joint United States Military Assistance Group-Thailand), who looks like a bull with a crewcut, looked up. Goetzke is big enough and looks tough enough to frighten a tank, but he has a carefully cultivated pleasant manner.

His job depends in a large part on diplomacy. He is a skydiver with 1,600 jumps. He is also the one who got Coyne and me in on this one. Beside him sat Maj. Mark Smith,

commander of the Special Forces advisory detachment in Korea. Smith has the Distinguished Service Cross, and was a POW for 364 days. He boasts of being the only field-grade high-school dropout in the U.S. Army, and after two days of on-and-off conversations with him, I am convinced that if we have a war he will be our only dropout general. He knows his stuff.

Another jumper was a young Italian-looking guy in a bright-red camouflage suit, which would fit into no known background on this planet. Next to him sat a very beautiful, very blonde, very pregnant lady in blue jeans. The guy in the Martian cammies immediately reached down into his kit bag and pulled out a gleaming white Bell helmet. "Just happen to have one here."

"When you go jumping it's customary to wear a helmet," said Goetzke, his eyes, over a coffee cup, giving me a preliminary inspection for signs of incipient mental inadequency.

"Where'd ya get the red cammies?" I asked my benefactor, hoping to make somebody else look dumber than I did.

Photos by Jim Coyne, Jim Morris



Thai trooper descends from Thai skies. **RIGHT:** Royal Thai Army female parachute riggers also participated in joint Thai-U.S. Civic Action parachute jump.

He grinned. "Maid washed 'em in Clorox[®]," he said.

I thanked him and took the helmet back to our table, where Coyne was deep in conversation with two men: Jack Phillips, a retired Special Forces lieutenant colonel, who spent his last six years in the Army in Thailand, speaks and writes Thai fluently, and works there now for an oil company, and Jack's friend, later identified as Dr. Sivavudh Devahastin Ayudha,

backed by the Chinese, although the Chinese have very largely pulled the plug on them, and the other from PULO (the Pattani United Liberation Organization), a Muslim separatist group, largely trained and supplied by the Libyans, led by the ubiquitous Mommar Khadafy. For that reason the jump we were making, although in no sense a combat one, was in

every sense operational. It was part of a joint Thai-U.S. Civic Action project to build a school at Tambon Pang La, Sadao District, Songkhla Province, the 230th such school financed by the *Mitrapab* (Friendship) Educational Foundation in the 21 years of its existence. What makes the program important is that it is a valuable tool for national stability; what made this jump significant was that it was the first one in U.S. aircraft since the United States pulled out six years ago.

Thai jumper exits
C-123, wearing
MC-1J
parachute.

adviser to the deputy prime minister for economics. He has a Ph.D. from Claremont College in Orange County, Calif.

"This first time you make jump?" Coyne asked.

"Yes," said the Thai, "it's something I've wanted to do for a long time, but I only recently made the decision to proceed."

"You better get yourself a helmet," I said to Coyne, as I sat down.

He gave me a look of annoyance, since I had procured only one, and kept it for myself.

"There's bound to be one on the flight line," he said, and went back to his conversation.

The area where we were making the jump was on the southern peninsula of Thailand, which has not *one but two* insurgencies going at the same time, one from the Communist Party of Thailand, theoretically

Mitrapab began in 1961 on a field-training exercise near a village called Ban Yang. During a sudden tropical downpour, Lt. Col. Prathip and his counterpart, a Capt. Carver, took shelter in a nearby one-room schoolhouse. To their surprise there was just about as much rain inside as outside. It was a mystery to both of them how any learning could take place there during the rainy season.

They decided to get a bunch of their jump buddies together, put on a demonstration and charge admission.

Hopefully they would raise enough money for a new schoolhouse.

A bunch of people descending from the sky might not be a big draw in New York City, or even Dubuque, Iowa, but there's not much to do in a Thai village on a Sunday afternoon other than to wander out in the street and watch the livestock propagate. If people in some of these villages would walk a block and a half to watch a *farang* (foreigner) eat noodles, what would they do with a whole flock falling through the air under clouds of bright nylon?

At the Haadyai Airport Coyne and I went our separate ways, I to shoot pictures of the pre-jump activities, he to scrounge a helmet, which, after much cursing — and not a little apprehension — he did.

There is nothing quite like getting the control officers' briefing in a foreign language to increase your confidence. The Thai major who served as marshalling area control officer had an excellent chart of the DZ (drop zone) though; it wasn't that hard to follow.

Col. Goetzke came up and said, "Coyne just told me he's never jumped a steerable before. Tell him how it works, will you, so he won't land in Malaysia."

"Okay, sir," I said. No problem there, a steerable is the easiest thing in the world to operate. "Face into the wind and hold at 150 feet no matter what," he shouted over his shoulder as he walked away.

Oh yeah, I forgot.

This was Coyne's first jump in 16 years. If I had realized that, I'd have had him doing PLFs (parachute landing falls) off the dresser in his hotel room. It wouldn't have hurt me to do a few either. I hadn't made one since the first SOF convention, about two years back.

One of the guys I met at the airport was Glen Gamble, a former U.S. Army captain, vice-president of the Mitrapab Foundation, who had organized the jump. He was geared out in a jumpsuit and walking with a limp.

"You gonna jump on that?"

"Yeah, it's twisted a little. The

ankle's wrapped so tight it won't bend, that's all."

I didn't say anything. It was his ankle, his ass for that matter.

If you haven't jumped in a long time you forget too many things. Before chuting up I put my notebook and pen in my left breast pocket, which turned out to be a mistake.

Then it was time to board the Thai C-123 for the 50-klick flight to Tamhon Pang La.

Five minutes after we took off, Goetzke blew across the face of his watch and held up three fingers, the sign for a three-knot wind.

On the first pass, Mark Smith jumped with the Thai flag, while a Thai colonel jumped the American flag from the U.S. C-130. From a journalistic standpoint either Coyne or I should have been on the ground to photograph this moment, but — screw it — we were both paratroopers long before we became journalists.

Smith stood in the door for a long time and then, presto, he disappeared.

The first stick was primarily made up of lady riggers from the Royal Thai Army, and then it was our turn. As we stood there hanging onto our

static lines like New Yorkers on the rush-hour subway, I was surprised that I had none of the usual pre-jump flutters, no frantic gulping for air, no butterflies in the stomach. That *really* frightened me. This might be a Hollywood jump from 3,000 feet, but there is no such thing as a casual parachute jump.

When it goes it goes like a freight train. Quickly, one by one, the jumpers ahead disappeared as their static lines went taut from the anchor line cable to the door. Then I had both hands in the door, one toe over the edge, a glimpse of blue sky, wispy clouds, paddy in the lower third of my vision. Go!



ABOVE: American military personnel also jumped in joint Thai-U.S. Civic Action project. **BELOW:** Jumpers prepare to exit C-123.



Up and out, feet together, hands on the reserve, but my elbows weren't in and the prop blast turned me face to earth as I felt the tug at my back that pulled my trash out.

No sweat, maybe one twist in the lines. I kicked it out as the sound of the airplane droned away and I was left alone in a clear blue sky.

Then I heard Coyne's eerie cackle as the olive-drab hemisphere of his chute drifted under my feet. Below I could see paddies, some kind of off-the-wall industrial plant, not a sign of a DZ.

I turned and ran with the wind. There it was, a great scar of earth with a canopied reviewing stand on one side and people all around it. I looked for smoke from a grenade, but instead there was a smoking brush fire. The smoke was flat to the ground and streaming; this was no three-knot wind. I turned and held even though I was still at 1,200 to 1,500 feet. This rig should have about a 10-knot forward speed, and I was still going backwards at a good clip. Even so, from where I had turned I should come in pretty close to the skydiver's target.

Time to get to work. Only every time I took my hands off the toggles to shoot my wrist-mounted camera the wind turned me around to run with it. All my shots were only half aimed, and I was blown way off course and way over the target, over halfway to the far edge of the DZ.

The hell with photography! I turned and held, still moving like I had driven off a second-floor ramp on a motorcycle, backwards. I cursed every ounce of the eight pounds of Singha Beer and restaurant food I had put on since Boulder, knowing from previous unhappy landings that it could make the difference between an okay landing and splattering like a

Col. George Goetzke, JUSMAG-Thai (right), ponders jumping as C-123 nears DZ.



ton of hammered shit. I got my feet and knees together and my toes curled. I held, caught one glimpse of the earth racing in a streaming blur beneath my feet, then locked my eyes fixedly on the horizon while my entire reproductive apparatus withdrew into the perineal cavity, for I did not want what I knew was coming.

Heelsasshead! I felt something snap in my chest. It felt like I'd been speared. Holy Jesus, I've been crippled for life!

I tried to move around and encountered no difficulty. But the pain in my heart was incredible. I got to my feet and pulled the quick release on my bellyband. Seven Thais collapsed my chute and took it off.

I withdrew the notebook and pen from my breast pocket. I'd been stabbed; what snapped was the spine of my notebook. If I could still breathe this easily, no ribs were broken, but I had bruised them badly. Even as I write this a month later it still hurts.

A 10-year-old girl in a scout uniform came up to me and extended a tray filled with cold glasses of ice water, easily the nicest thing which has ever happened to me on a drop zone. "Thanks!" I said, and grinned.

Some last vestige of airborne pride made me take the kit bag from the Thais and lug it to the turn-in point.

"Congratulations!" Mark Smith yelled at me as we came in. "You're one of six people who hit the DZ."

"Where's Coyne?"

He pointed. Mekong Jimmy was in front of the reviewing stand, shooting with his Sureshot and laughing his ass off. "I did a perfect PLF right in front of the reviewing stand," he said.

Were I a more generous-spirited man this news would have pleased me, but it did not.

Glen Gamble turned too low and augered in. He broke an arm and his pelvis. The next day they put him on the airplane on a stretcher, moving very carefully. At every abrupt movement he clenched his teeth and said nothing. He did not look happy.

One of the Thais, whose name I didn't get, broke his pelvis also.

Dr. Sivavudh landed in the trees a long way from the DZ, but he was okay. He came in grinning, talking real fast about his next jump and about getting into freefall.

As we came off the DZ, we were led under the canopy over the reviewing stand, before an ancient, wizened, Buddhist monk in saffron robes and shaven head. He regarded me with an enigmatic expression, amusement and compassion in his eyes. As I knelt before him, he placed a medal of the Buddha, on a saffron ribbon, around my neck. ㄨ



SPAIN'S SAW ENTRY

SOF Exclusive: CETME's MG82

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



ABOVE: CETME AMELI/MG82 SPAM (Special-Purpose Assault Machine gun) designed by Col. Jose Maria Jimenez Alfaro, director of CETME, shows distinct likeness to MG42. **LEFT:** CETME MG82 in Cal. 5.56mm NATO shown with 200-rd. assault pack.

LA *Compania de Estudios Tecnicos de Materiales Especiales* has recently introduced a new *ametralladora ligera* in 5.56mm NATO — which is to say, CETME has a new squad automatic weapon. Called AMELI in Spain and the MG82 or SPAM (Special Purpose Assault Machine gun) by its exclusive U.S. distributor, Odin International, Ltd. (Dept. SOF, 818 Slaters Lane, Alexandria, VA 22314), this latest entry into the 5.56mm LMG sweepstakes exhibits numerous innovative design features as well as a distinguished ancestry.

Designed by Col. Jose Maria Jimenez Alfaro, who is director of CETME (a Spanish government-owned arsenal), development work on the MG82 was disguised under the subterfuge of "20mm automatic" studies.

MG82

CETME has long manufactured, under license, the MG42 in caliber 7.62x51mm NATO and it is the standard medium machine gun of the Spanish army. The MG82's trigger-housing group is in fact right off the MG42 assembly line.

Because of the extremely high rates of fire attainable by the MG42/82 guns, the impact of the bolt bent on the trigger sear must occur with full-face engagement or the mating surfaces will be chipped. To ensure full area contact, the MG42/82's novel, yet simple, trigger mechanism utilizes a controlled sear, activated by a tripper, which rises to a predetermined position to present its full frontal area to the bolt bent.

However, the CETME MG82 is not just a scaled-down MG42 in 5.56mm NATO. Short-recoil-operated, the MG42 uses a muzzle booster (called a *duese* in German) to deliver further rearward momentum to the barrel. First used on the British Vickers machine gun, an expansion chamber just beyond the muzzle is momentarily sealed off by the passing bullet, and the rapidly increasing gas pressure is applied to the barrel face. As the barrel is still locked to the bolt at this moment, the bolt velocity is also significantly increased.

This acceleration of the bolt is an essential design feature of all rifle-caliber short-recoil-operated machine guns. In the MG42/82 system it takes place during the unlocking of the bolt from the barrel. The locking rollers travel in both the barrel extension and the bolt head, completing their travel in both components at the same time. As the path of travel in the barrel extension is longer than that in the bolt head, the bolt head must travel faster and is thereby accelerated.

Recoil energy alone is sufficient to operate the MG82's system, and thus the use of a muzzle booster is obviated. I say hallelujah to that, as men in the field have been cursing and scraping powder residue and copper wash out of these infernal devices ever since the first one was installed on a Vickers in 1911.

The MG82's barrel extension is not threaded to the barrel as in the MG42, but instead is an integral part of the receiver's barrel housing, thus gaining a small savings in both the weight and size of spare barrels.

AMELI's chamber is fluted to ease extraction and allow gases to escape in the event that the projectile does not exit the bore. Proponents





of short-recoil-operated weapons often cite safety attributes, as gas-operated systems can reach critical pressures if barrel obstructions are below the gas port. However, I blew up my good, old, recoil-operated MG42 as a consequence of a shed projectile jacket which remained in the chamber. MG82 barrels feature hard-chromed bores and chambers and are available with either 1:7-inch or 1:12-inch twist.

A round nub at the muzzle end serves as a barrel guide since except for the locking block at the chamber end of the barrel housing, the receiver in the MG42/82 system serves merely as a container, or shell, for the operating components.

Ejection from the MG82 has been cleverly designed so that spent cases hit the front of the trigger guard and then fall in a neat pile onto the ground. This presumably avoids bouncing cases off hard surfaces such as rocks and certainly makes for a tidy battlefield. The ejector is a two-piece affair as with the MG42. During the initiation of our test-firing, the issue ejector failed to do its job and numerous stoppages were incurred. Replacement with a larger, improved ejector solved this problem immediately.

The MG82 has a handsome, durable, hard-baked, olive-drab finish and a whole assault pack full of keynote features. A cartridge alone will completely disassemble the MG82. Should the cocking handle break off, the weapon can be cocked by the bolt's top stud. The receiver can be broken down into two components in a matter of seconds — a possibly important consideration for certain types of airborne and



TOP: CETME MG82 in assault-carry position. **LEFT:** Spanish soldier moves forward during field trials with MG82. **ABOVE:** CETME MG82 has cyclic rate of fire of 900 or 1,250 rpm. **RIGHT:** MG82 shows outward characteristics of MG42, weighs 14.8 lbs. empty and is 36.6 inches long.

MG82

other special ops. The issue butt stock has fittings for mounting the weapon on the current MG42/MG3 tripod and — with an obvious eye on far-eastern markets — an extremely short butt stock is also available. The front sight folds down to prevent damage and luminescent night sights are standard issue. Barrel changes consume only moments and can be executed from a low-profile prone position with ease.

The MG82 uses the Stoner-type (now called M27) disintegrating link, a scaled-down version of the M13 link as used in the M60 GPMG. Two sheet-metal ammunition assault packs are available, for 100 and 200 linked rounds, respectively. The rear panel of the assault packs is transparent plastic. The packs are installed by means of a removable bracket attached to the left side of the receiver.

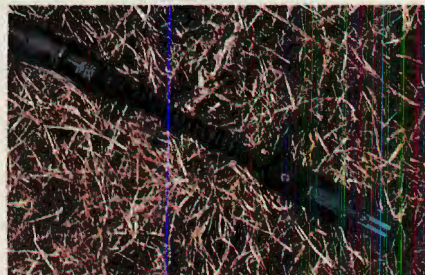
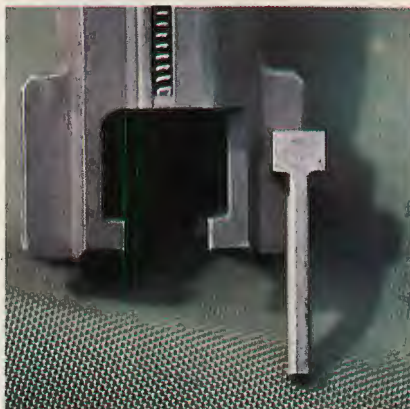
The CETME MG82's feed system is that of the MG42, only scaled down to accept the 5.56mm NATO cartridge. The MG42's feed system has been much imitated and variations on its excellent theme are found in both the M60 and FN MAG.

Ammunition is placed onto the feed tray with the open side of the links downward so that the belt is above the cartridge. Belt movement is produced by the bolt's spring-loaded top stud which rides in a curved channel in the feed arm. The feed arm nests under the top cover and is pivoted at the butt end. As the bolt reciprocates, the feed arm moves across the tray and operates a lever attached to the belt-feed slide. This slide has two sets of spring-loaded pawls. When one set of pawls is moving out and over the cartridges, the other pawls are pulling the belt in. Each set of pawls moves the belt across one half its travel distance. This load sharing reduces the forces on the belt and feed mechanism and produces the smooth belt flow so characteristic of the MG42/MG82.

The MG82 is a warrior's joy to shoot. At 14.8 pounds empty, it is the lightest of this new breed of belt-fed 5.56mm squad automatics. Only 36.6 inches long, this little yardstick of death is a highly maneuverable and potent package. Silhouette targets at 200 to 300 meters across the pond we were shooting over *literally* vaporized as fast as the MG82 could be brought back onto a new target (which was damn fast) and four to five rounds ticked off in



ABOVE: Spanish MG82 is a lightweight, compact, squad machine gun. **LEFT:** View of weapon's bolt head with improved bump-type ejector.



ABOVE: Bolt assembly, recoil spring and recoil buffer. **LEFT:** Assault pack contains 200 rounds of 5.56mm in M27 disintegrating link. Packs are installed by means of removable bracket attached to left side of receiver.



Ammunition is placed in feed tray with the open side of links outward.



UPPER LEFT: Weapon's rear sight is adjustable to 1,000 meters. **ABOVE:** MG82 barrels feature hard-chromed bores and chambers, are available with either 1:7-inch or 1:12-inch twist. **LEFT:** Barrel may be changed within a few seconds. Note carrying handle attached to it.



either the prone, kneeling, hip-assault or standing positions.

The cyclic rate of 1,250 rounds per minute (too high for my taste) can be adjusted to 900 rounds per minute by substitution of the lighter rate-reducing bolt supplied with the gun.

The CETME MG82 also comes complete with a sling, nylon rain poncho/carrying case, spare barrel and case, 100-round assault pack, and a spare-parts kit consisting of the rate-reducing bolt, ejector, ejector extension and firing pin. The entire package is available to law-enforcement agencies and qualified Class 3 dealers for approximately \$1,850, f.o.b. Alexandria, Virginia.

The dawn of the lightweight compact 5.56mm squad machine gun is now upon us. It is a long overdue and welcome step forward in the evolution of modern military small arms. Now 5.56mm SAW systems, both belt and magazine-fed, will continue to proliferate as their salient features most closely approximate current user requirements at the infantry squad level. The CETME MG82 is certain to remain in the forefront of this necessary trend. ☒

CETME MG82 SPECIFICATIONS

WEIGHTS:
 MG82 machine gun with bipod, empty 14.8 lbs.
 200 rounds of ammunition (linked in assault pack) 6.6 lbs.
OVERALL LENGTH: . 36.6 inches.
OPERATION: locked roller, short recoil (no muzzle booster).
RIFLING: 1 turn in 12 inches or 1 turn in 7 inches.
CYCLIC RATE OF FIRE: 900 or 1,250 rounds per minute.
REAR SIGHT: Adjustable for elevation; 100 to 1,000 meters.



ABOVE: MG82 has durable, hard-baked, olive-drab finish. **LEFT:** Unlike MG42, 82 is entirely recoil-operated, not gas-assisted. **BELOW:** Quick-change barrel allows three-second barrel change. **RIGHT:** MG82 trigger-group assembly is identical to MG42. Receiver is stamped with serial number 10.



SHADOW WAR IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

MY Philippine Airlines BAC 111 all but stood on its wing as it dropped out of a cloudless sky toward the Zamboanga City airport. The dive-bomber approach left me wondering whether the local Moro guerrillas had taken to shooting at airliners.

Rolling down the runway past Huey "slicks" and prop-driven T-28Ds of the Philippine Air Force offered less speculative evidence of the insurgency that has already dragged on for a decade and taken 50,000


Filipino lives.
Once on the

ground, I was met by two Ministry of Information officials standing by with a car for the ride to SOUTHCOM headquarters on the edge of town. The Philippine armed forces have borrowed much from their American allies, including the fetish for acronyms. SOUTHCOM is short for Southern Command, Armed Forces of the Philippines. It is the nerve center for a combined land, sea and air effort aimed at wearing down an estimated 10,000 armed Moro guerrillas fighting for an independent Moslem state in the southern Philippines.

Frustrating this secessionist movement is the chief responsibility of Maj. Gen. Del-

fin C. Castro, SOUTHCOM's diminutive but ramrod-straight commander. Thanks to my letter of introduction from Philippine Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, Gen. Castro provided every possible courtesy. For starters, he personally conducted a two-hour briefing which traced the whole political and military course of the Moro rebellion throughout Mindanao, Palawan and the Sulu Archipelago since 1972. Then there was dinner served on white linen, with more talk of politics, counterinsurgency, military history and Mindanao's impressive development potential. The evening ended over brandy and bourbon, and a discussion of where best to send a correspondent who wanted a close-up look at the shadow war in the southern Philippines.

The choice was Basilan Island,



"Centurion" Strike Force commander, 1st Lt. Norberto I. Alindayu, reconnoiters shallow cave used by Moro guerrillas. Signs of recent habitation included food scraps and cigarette butts. Caves protect guerrillas from elements, air strikes and artillery fire.

SOF Hunts Moro Guerrillas

Text & Photos
by Robert J. Caldwell

600 square miles of coconut plantations and jungle separated from Mindanao by the 20-kilometer-wide Basilan Strait. A chopper would be available to fly me to Basilan the next afternoon, in time to join Philippine troops for a two-day sweep in search of Moro guerrillas.

Zamboanga City and other locations in southern Mindanao had just been reopened to tourists after being on the restricted list for several years because of resurgent guerrilla activity and terrorism. But the drive from SOUTHCOM headquarters to my hotel on Zamboanga's waterfront that night revealed a city that looked like anything but a tourist mecca. The streets

were dark and deserted, store fronts were shuttered and the night security guard at the hotel carried a Thompson submachine gun. Well, at least I could count on a lot of noise before anyone got to my room.

Flying into Basilan on a Huey slick with another as escort turned out to be a time trip — Vietnam all over again. First, there was that never-to-be-forgotten “whap, whap, whap” of chopper blades beating the air overhead. Below, brown-skinned children tending fish nets and water buffalo looked up and waved as we passed. Slit trenches, bunkers and mortar pits marked the Philippine Army’s brigade headquarters at Isabella, capital of Basilan Province. As the choppers touched down amid swirling dust, it might have been Binh Dinh Province 15 years ago.

After a hurried change into jungle cammies, I was briefed on the local situation. Lt. Mohammad Nur Askalani — a Moslem, as his name implied — pulled aside the cloth cover over the brigade’s operations map. The 5th, 32nd, 41st and 45th Infantry Battalions were dispersed across the island in a series of base camps. The 2nd Howitzer Battalion, parceled out in batteries and sections, provided artillery support. A few tanks and APCs from the 1st Battalion of the Philippine Army’s Light Armored Regiment were available as well. In all, some 3,000 troops.

Air support, courtesy of the T-28Ds I had seen at Zamboanga, could be called up in emergencies. Philippine Navy patrol boats kept watch on the surrounding waters.

Armed Moro guerrillas on the island were thought to number about 1,000. Most were under the command of the chief Moslem rebel group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). But according to Lt. Askalani, some of the guerrillas had become little more than bandits, robbing local residents and kidnapping those who might command a worthwhile ransom.

In any case, the army’s job was to enforce “peace and order” via persuasion and civic action if possible, by force if necessary. Amnesty, cash payments and resettlement offers had prompted hundreds of guerrillas on Basilan to surrender. Those who refused were legitimate targets for less gentle means.

Then it was back to the choppers for another hop, this time to the 5th Battalion base camp in a coconut plantation near the center of the island. This was Indian country and the choppers paused only momentarily as I gathered my gear and trotted off the LZ toward the waiting battalion commander and his staff.

As the choppers lifted off for Zam-

boanga, I suffered the first pangs of “what-am-I-doing-here-itis.” The 5th Battalion base camp looked even more like Vietnam than anything I had seen on Basilan so far. More trenches, bunkers and mortar pits, with the jungle closing in on all sides. A reinforced NVA company would have eaten this place for breakfast.

A clutch of villagers from a nearby barrio stood just down the road, staring as if the Hueys had deposited something out of “Close Encounters of the Third Kind.”

Lt. Col. Renato A. Gacias pumped my hand and announced that I was the first American journalist ever to visit his battalion in the field. That would look good, I thought, in my SOF obit. I also shook hands with 1st Lt. Norberto I. Alindayu, a decorated career soldier slated to lead the next day’s company-sized sweep in search of Moros. Whatever the camp looked like, Alindayu seemed the kind of junior officer any army in the world would be glad to claim.

The second briefing of the day brought me up to date on recent events in the 5th Battalion’s sector. Casualties had been light in recent months, with one trooper killed and

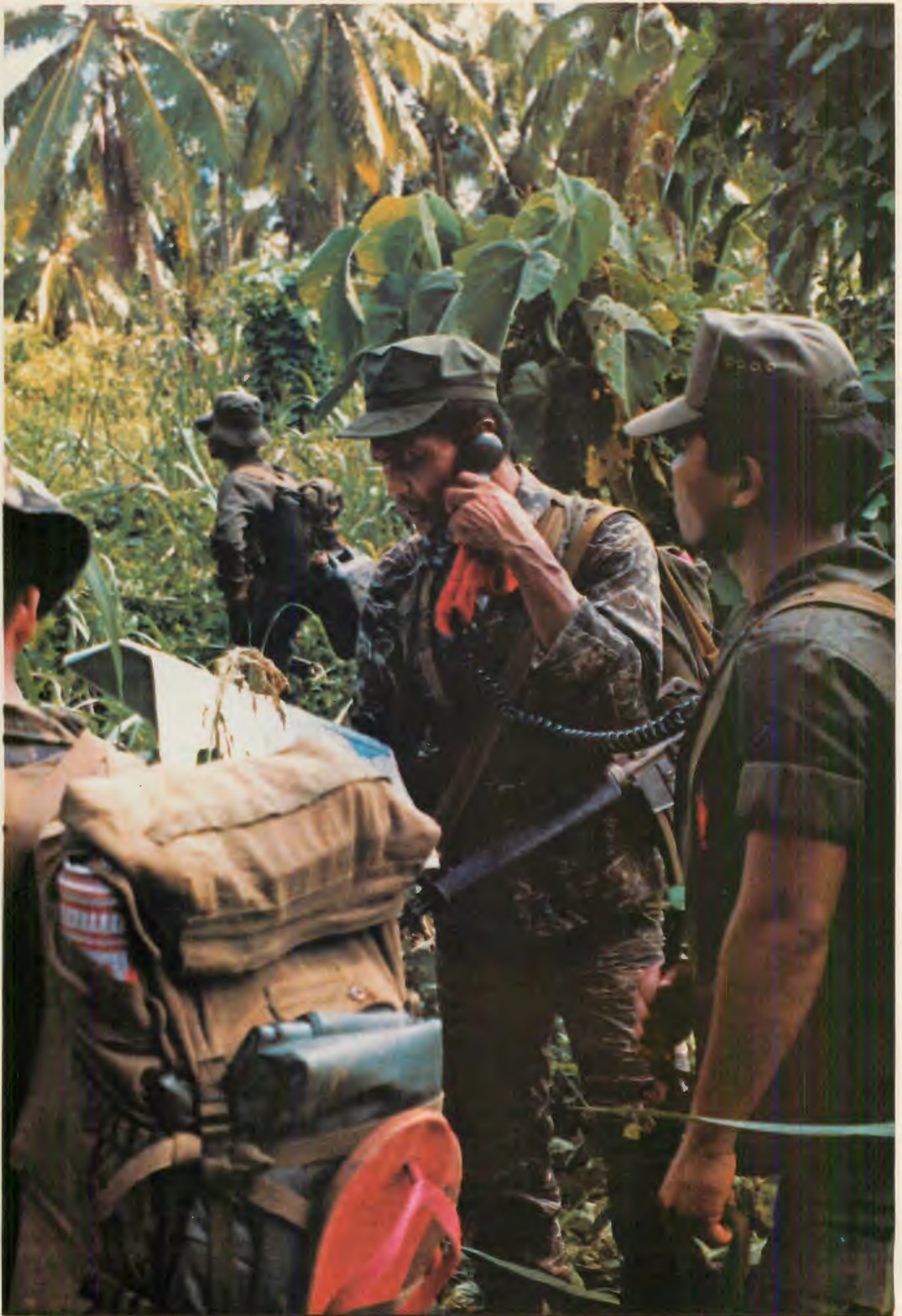
seven wounded in the latest fire fight with the guerrillas. Most of the local insurgents seemed to be operating in small groups. But vigilance was well advised. Only months before, a large Moro force had caught a Philippine Army unit off guard on nearby Pata Island. The ambush killed all but two members of a 122-man company.

The Pata massacre had prompted caution and most extended patrols were being mounted in platoon strength or more. Accordingly, the next day’s sweep would include all 80 troopers of the 5th Battalion’s elite Composite Strike Force Company. This hand-picked unit, dubbed the Centurions, acted as the battalion’s quick reaction force, available on short notice to pursue guerrillas or come to the aid of a village or outpost under Moro attack.

Two of the 5th Battalion’s four companies were located at the base camp, known as Campo Uno. Charlie Company manned an outpost 20 kilometers northeast of Campo Uno. And Delta Company garrisoned Tuburan, an all-Moslem town of 2,000 on the Moro Gulf. A radio net kept everyone in touch.



ABOVE: Map of Philippines. Operations area circled. **RIGHT:** Lt. Alindayu radios our position to battalion headquarters at midmorning on first day of sweep. Battalion commander had promised prompt artillery and air support if we encountered guerrillas in strength.





Campo Uno was also home to a Philippine Army Special Forces detachment charged with organizing and arming local self-defense groups in villages — Christian and Moslem alike — throughout the battalion's sector. Typically, each barrio of 100 or so families would have a squad of these home-defense guards armed with M1s, bolt-action Springfields and an occasional M16. Some villages also had a radio with which to call for help.

Naturally, the *guerrillas* preferred to pick on the barrios rather than the army. The Moros mounted raids to replenish their supply of arms and ammunition, steal food and intimidate the locals. The Strike Force's primary

objective would be to track down the Moros who had kidnapped three civilians, apparently for ransom.

At 0800 the next morning, Lt. Alindayu briefed his platoon and squad leaders. The Philippines is an overwhelmingly Catholic nation and the army reflects that. Alindayu's introduction of me as "our brother in Christ" seemed as natural as his command presence. He then detailed the mission objectives: Rescue the kidnap victims, flush the guerrillas and "protect our visitor at all times." Alindayu wasn't kidding. During the next 30 hours, I could hardly move without being shadowed by two Strike Force troopers whose chief responsibility was to keep me alive.

The sweep formation would be a "V," open end forward, with 3rd Platoon echeloned to the left, 2nd Platoon to the right, and 1st Platoon in the center protecting the rear. Noise discipline would be strictly enforced. In the event of contact, the troops were to return fire and then seek to envelop the guerrillas by maneuvering to the flanks.

Stage one of the operation was a reminder that the PA is a Third World army short on money and equipment. Only two trucks — a U.S. deuce-and-a-half and an ancient $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton weapons carrier — were available to move the Centurions to the jumping-off point, a Christian barrio seven kilometers east of Campo Uno.



ABOVE: Although Composite Strike Force company is 5th Battalion's elite unit, equipment shortages are not uncommon; most troopers wear plain fatigues rather than cammies. **UPPER RIGHT:** Author with "Centurion" Strike Force commander Lt. Allndayu and members of the unit prepare to set out on sweep in search of MNLF guerrillas holding kidnap victims.

The weapons carrier groaned to the top of each hill and then rolled down the other side devoid of any brakes worthy of the name. The first two platoons, dropped at Barangay Sinangkapan, had to wait while the battered weapons carrier returned for the remaining Centurions.



WAR ON TWO FRONTS

At first glance, the Philippines doesn't look like a country at war. Manila moves to the rhythm of commerce: commuters and throngs of visitors from abroad. No soldiers on the streets, no military parades, no loudspeakers, no patriotic exhortations.

The second look is more revealing. In many of the capital's larger office buildings, private security guards screen all packages and issue on-premises passes in exchange for a driver's license or other identity document. At some of the five-star tourist hotels, visitors may be asked to pass through metal detectors and to submit to a peek inside their briefcases or purses.

The domestic terminal at Manila International Airport is guarded by police carrying pump-action Remington shotguns. And Philippine Airline planes on the tarmac are watched by uniformed members of the paramilitary Philippine Constabulary who tote M16s.

Still, the casual tourist might assume that this is nothing more than sensible precaution against the sort of terrorism that can happen almost anywhere. And, in part, they would be correct.

But the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) are at war. Indeed, they are fighting two wars — one against communist guerrillas of the New People's Army, and the other against Moslem insurgents under the banner of the Moro National Liberation Front. The NPA, the military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines, gets no known outside support. The MNLF, however, has received both arms and some political support from Moslem nations, notably Mommar Khadafy's Libya.

Both of these insurgencies are

largely invisible to the tourists and even to many Filipinos living outside guerrilla-infested areas. The small-scale encounters that characterize both wars typically occur in rural regions, often in the less-developed and more remote sections of the Philippines.

Casualties in any given action are rarely enough to rate more than a few paragraphs in Manila's daily newspapers, or the barest mention on radio or television newscasts. And yet, the 10-year-old Moslem rebellion has claimed an estimated 50,000 lives. As for the stubborn insurgency waged since the late 1960s by the New People's Army, the Philippines is the only pro-Western country in Southeast Asia plagued by a communist guerrilla movement that is actually growing in strength.

NPA forces, estimated at up to 6,000 armed, full-time guerrillas, are concentrated in northern and southeastern Luzon, on Samar in the Visayan Islands and, increasingly, on Mindanao.

The estimated 10,000 armed guerrillas of the secessionist Moro National Liberation Front operate on Mindanao, Palawan and the Sulu Archipelago.

In response to these threats, the Armed Forces of the Philippines have doubled in size since 1972. At present, the AFP numbers about 112,000 regulars, 43,000 paramilitary Philippine Constabulary and 65,000 civil home-defense guards.

Getting a first-hand look at the AFP's counterinsurgency operations can take some doing. Understandably, the government of Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos is not eager to promote the kind of foreign press coverage that would discourage tourism, foreign investment or international confidence in the country's stability.

— R.J.C.

"We're poor but we're patient," Alindayu said with a grin.

But at least the Centurions would outgun any guerrillas. The Strike Force boasted a 90mm recoilless rifle, three M60 machine guns, seven M203 rocket launchers and M16s for everyone else.

If the guerrillas ran, as expected, Delta Company had a blocking force in place to intercept them.

With everyone finally present and accounted for, the Centurions moved off into a forest of coconut palms shortly after 0900. Before long, we were headed uphill toward the most likely guerrilla lairs on the heavily jungled slopes of Mt. Dugaa. Any doubts about whether this was guerrilla country were erased when the Centurions happened upon a Moro "running trench," a sunken path laboriously hacked out of the jungle by insurgents who knew that mobility was a key to staying alive.

By 1050, Alindayu had found a shallow cave — empty — and marked it on his map as a guerrilla shelter. Minutes later, we spotted a second cave, and then an abandoned guerrilla hootch built low against a rock outcropping. Detecting any of these shelters from the air would have been impossible. A campsite not far away yielded cold ashes and a Moslem



ABOVE: Muslim home-defense unit, organized by Philippine Army Special Forces, carry U.S. M1 Garands, M16s and Spanish Mauser rifles. This five-man squad, led by "Commander Arak" (second from right), provides Barangay Languyan's 500 residents some protection against terrorist raids. BELOW: Dawn of second day brings misty rain, and radio check with 5th Battalion headquarters for latest intelligence. RIGHT: Strike Force trooper relaxes, M16 slung low across his back. Nearly all members of this composite unit are seasoned regulars rather than draftees or recruits.



headwrap. Clearly, we were tramping through the Moro's front door. Whether they would try to slam it in our faces, or simply duck out the back was the question.

With no contact, and no fresher sign of guerrillas, we paused for chow at contour 360. Let it not be said that Lt. Alindayu didn't know how to preserve a semblance of civilization in the field. From out of someone's backpack came two spotless china plates for the CO and your correspondent. Fresh coconuts rounded out a tasty lunch of precooked rice, pork and fish. Life in the infantry need not be all C-rats and muddy holes.

By 1400, we were climbing again. Mt. Dugaa began to seem like Mt. Everest with jungle. At 1420, 3rd Platoon ran smack into a cliff face. Scouts looked for a way around, but the jungle was virtually impenetrable. Machetes were useless in the thick

tangle of vines, undergrowth and exposed tree roots. Even moving along the contour became impossible.

No one objected when Alindayu decided the Moros could not have made it either. If the guerrillas were dragging civilian captives, it was a good bet that coming down off Mt. Dugaa might have seemed the only way for them to run.

Dugaa gives way on its northeast slope to a plateau and a coconut plantation. Here, the Centurions uncovered a masterfully camouflaged coconut-log bunker that could have accommodated a full rifle squad with automatic weapons covering the most likely approach routes. But it too was empty, and Alindayu had nothing more to show than another mark on his map.

The long, hot walk through the plantation yielded nothing more and, at 1500, we reached Barangay Ma-

rang, a Christian barrio of plantation workers and their families. The army is predictably popular with Christians and the residents turned out to offer water and information. No guerrillas, with or without captives, had been seen in recent days.

The next barrio had lost a home guard to raiding Moros the month before but no one had glimpsed a guerrilla since then. The trail was getting undeniably colder.

Alindayu had orders to bivouac for the night at Charlie Company's camp atop a ridge overlooking Barangay Sinulatan, a Moslem village. We reached Sinulatan at 1600, dog tired, and prepared to give the Moro his due. The guerrillas had not kept their insurgency going for 10 years by being easily run to ground.

Slogging into Tuburan, it was hard to believe that the town was once the most prosperous Moslem community on Basilan Island. The war, and the depressed international market for coconut products, had left Tuburan a hard-scrabble shadow of its former self. Kids were dirty and ill-clothed. The main drag was all ruts and pot-holes. The houses, built of scrap lumber and set on stilts, were patched and weather-beaten.

Tuburan's pride, a tiled mosque that must have cost the locals a fortune to build, was still scarred with bullet holes and other battle damage not yet repaired from a 1973 fire fight between Moro guerrillas and Philippine Marines.

The town itself might have been pacified, but the bunkers and mortar pits of its Delta Company garrison illustrated the contested state of the surrounding boonies.

The Centurions would rest that day and then strike east into the hills before dawn. A scheduled interview with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos in Manila required that I catch a Huey back to Zamboanga that afternoon. Waving to Lt. Alindayu as my chopper lifted, I recalled the words scrawled in faded white paint on the side of Tuburan's bullet-pocked mosque: "Victory or Our Death, but Never to Surrender." It could have been written by either side.

The next day, a brief communique from SOUTHCOM headquarters relayed the news from Basilan. The 5th Battalion's Composite Strike Force Company had located and attacked a Moro band in the hills east of Tuburan. Result: Eight Moros KIA, one Centurion WIA, seven weapons captured. The three kidnap victims turned up unharmed.

Alindayu would say later, "I think we taught them a good lesson." Many more will be needed before peace returns to the southern Philippines. ☒



AMTRAK AMBUSH

Continued from page 37

pression. My mouth and throat were so dry that I doubt whether any sound came out. I searched around for something to throw — a stone, anything to get their attention. If they passed by now and didn't see me, I'd be lost for good.

I found a rock and threw it, but my aim was way off. I threw another. It hit, but didn't attract anyone's attention. The lead vehicle passed. I threw another at the next vehicle in line. I nearly hit the TC. He jerked his head toward his right. I waved frantically. He saw me. He pointed to the rear and I guessed that it meant that help would be arriving soon.

I heard voices. American voices, running feet and the jangle of equipment coming closer. I heard someone say "Oh god, not you." It was a medic I knew. It was great to see a familiar face.

A medic track pulled up and stopped. Stretcher bearers came down — and I found myself up on the road. I must have blacked out from pain when they put me on the stretcher.

They loaded me onto the ramp of the medic track and took me to the east side of the field and off-loaded in the midst

of NVA corpses, some with parts blown away, gaping wounds over various parts of their bodies.

I could see the smoldering wreckage of No. 33, just the lower part of the hull. Another track also lay gutted. The dump trucks were shells. I saw the remains of the scraper, pride of the engineers. They were always so damned particular about when and how it was used. Now it was junk. I saw American bodies too. There were some I didn't know, engineers, and some I did know. One, a PFC named Williams, a driver, was crisped.

Then Doc came over. We made small-talk and I asked if I could have some water. Another medic heard this and said absolutely not. My reaction was fury. The smart ass hadn't been lying out in the hot sun all day without water. Doc got me a canteen and I sipped it slowly. When it was gone, he got me some ice from No. 38 to suck on. But I was still thirsty, so he sneaked a canteen from a dead NVA. He didn't need it. I hesitated for only a second. It didn't taste any worse than GI water.

While waiting for a dustoff, an officer from the relief force came over and asked how I was. I said I was fine now, but that some ARVNs had lifted my wallet and wrist watch and I was pissed off about it. He said he would check into

it and left. A little later he returned and said he had spoken with the MACV adviser and that the only patrol he had out that day had found me in the ditch and had to leave when they came under fire. The medic with them reported me as wounded, but alive. I thought, sure, they're all probably in it together! The chopper was coming in and, after it landed, I was loaded with the dead and we flew up to Trang Bang. Some guy above me still had some blood left. It dripped down his arm onto me.

This was my first chopper ride and all I could think of was getting shot down, but within a few minutes we landed. Trang Bang was a mess. It had taken a hell of a beating. The command center was gone, the commo shack too. Fires still burned. When I saw it, I realized that all those times we had laid over and had gotten mortared, those short rounds were not their best shots. It was just that they were laying the tubes for this. Just a bit more elevation and the rounds would be right on target. We picked up a few more wounded and lifted off for Cu Chi. I asked about Dave, Larry and Lloyd, but nobody said anything.

They took me to the evac hospital and cut my uniform away. As I lay there, naked, a tall, tanned nurse came up to me. Capt. Sharon Ryan from some place

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in Florida — I remember her vividly. She said she didn't want to get my hopes up, but if she were to take bets on it, I'd be going home. Sure, that would be nice, but I didn't believe it. It was just a morale booster, I thought. Then came the pre-op questions and the prepping. The last thing I remembered was the whisper that became a roar as they injected the sodium pentothol and everything went black.

I awoke in a dimly lit ward. Things were quiet, except for the hushed talk of the duty staff and an occasional moan from one of the wounded. I was encased in plaster from my chest halfway down my left leg, and completely down my right, but there was no pain. I drifted back to sleep, in that clean, soft bed — my first in three months.

The next day when I woke up, I looked around, now that there was enough light to see. There were guys with arms missing, legs missing. I was damned lucky, still in one piece. A couple of doctors came over, looked at my chart, and one mentioned that I'd be on my way home in about 10 days. He looked again at the records and added, "Happy birthday!"

Visitors slowly filtered in. There was some brass from Battalion. A colonel presented me with a Purple Heart and

said what a credit I was to the unit. Nice. Later, our Company first sergeant came by with a birthday cake.

The evening before we went on the operation, he had told several of us that a USO troop would arrive on the 26th. No headliners, but a show is a show. I told him that was just ducky. It would be my birthday and, with my usual good luck, I'd probably be out in the middle of a damn rice paddy. He laughed and said it was his birthday too. He was a big black guy, almost fatherly in his attitude toward us. He had been like that since the day we arrived.

Later, I was told that some officers from Intelligence wanted to talk to me if I felt up to it. Ha. I never thought I'd see the day when my permission would be sought. Not in the Army. They said they were there as a result of my charge that I had been ripped off by the ARVNs. They had recovered some items and wanted to know if I could identify any of them. I looked and couldn't believe it. There was the picture of my girl and a portion of my letter from home.

When I asked how they came by them, the answer nearly put me into shock. They recovered the articles from some bodies just a bit down the road from my position. They were wearing ARVN uniforms, but all carried NVA papers! I had

looked those bastards in the eye and cursed them. Why didn't they kill me? Some other things were cleared up too. For instance, that first group of soldiers to break out of the woodline, whom we thought were ARVNs — were not. We had let the NVA encircle us without even being aware of it.

It wasn't until a few days later that guys from the unit began dropping in. I had really been upset, thinking that I was being shunned for not behaving properly or maybe letting the unit down somehow. I thought about it, but couldn't understand why I was being ignored by my friends, especially when others indicated I had done well. Then I found out they had stayed away because of the ward I was in. It was the amputee ward. It wasn't until Jeff, Ken, Doc, T.J., Jack and Arty stopped in that I found out they were going to let me keep my leg. They had stayed away because they couldn't face me.

My first questions were about Dave, Larry and Lloyd. Had they made it out? How were they?

Dave died from shock and loss of blood before they could get treatment for him. The field dressing wasn't enough. Larry and Lloyd became separated from the main body. They were caught out in the open. Lloyd's legs had



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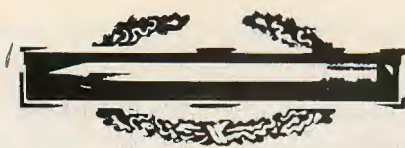
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been shot to pieces and he too died from loss of blood. Larry took a burst in the chest and died instantly. They had been gunned down, unarmed. The weapons which killed them were American, not communist. It appeared they had run into NVA dressed as ARVNs.

What a horrible thought. You think you're finally safe. You see allied troops and begin running toward them, excited at the prospect of somehow getting out of this madness — then they cut you down in your tracks. It hurt me deeply. I feel their loss to this day. They were friends tied to me with the kind of bond that only combat can form.

We visited for a while longer, finding out who had been wounded, who had been killed. I found out that First Section had heard our radio calls for support after we got into the fight. They all wanted to break off from their road sweep and make a run to join us, to help pull us out, but were told to stay put. Either the mission was too important, or the Army had written us off: no point in throwing more lives away.

It was frustrating for them, but we all knew that frustration.

I had felt it a number of weeks before. A single ACAV had been making its way back to Cu Chi from the north. It was within a few miles of home when, passing a plantation area, it was ambushed. We were all in the motor-pool area when we heard the call. Within seconds, we started the engine and mounted up, ready to sortie. But orders came down for us to stay put. All we could do was listen to the action over the radio, which didn't last long. Shouts, gunfire, shouts — silence. In a few short minutes, four good men died. I hadn't liked the driver of that vehicle because he was sort of a smart-ass, but that didn't matter then. He was one of us and it left us hollow and sick inside to know that we were powerless to do anything to help them when they needed us.

I found out from the guys that the NVA unit we ran into was more than we had bargained for. It was a full battalion which had just come out of Cambodia and was making for the Iron Triangle near Cu Chi. The number of operations

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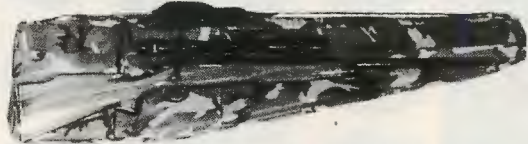
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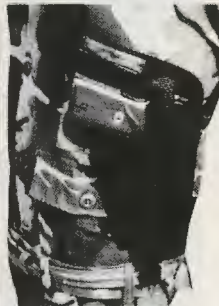
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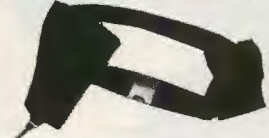
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conducted against that area would fill a book. It didn't matter what you did or how hard you tried. There were too many places to hide.

Well, I stayed there for 10 days, then flew to Camp Zama in Japan for another 10-day observation period and finally back to the States, ending up in Ft. Leonard Wood Army Hospital. I was there from mid-April until 23 March. It took nearly a year to replace the three inches of femur that a single round blew away in the wink of an eye. The Army, having no further use for me, separated me about 90 days early.

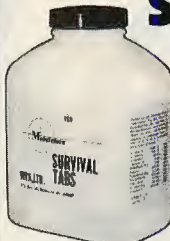
My brother, Art, received orders to go over shortly after I left Vietnam, assigned to a cav unit in the central highlands. He managed to complete his tour without a scratch.

For the rest of my unit, the war continued. For many it was shorter than for others. In the months that followed, our original unit of 36 men was nearly cut in half. Guys I arrived with came back, either wounded or killed. Ken, Jeff and Doc from No. 38 made it back alive. So did Arty and Jack. T.J. wasn't so lucky, and First Section didn't escape either.

I had a chance several years later to talk with Larry's folks about how he died. It had been very hard on them. They were down-home Iowa farm people and, while it hurt telling them about it and it hurt them to hear how it happened, at least they now know the real events of that day.

I have always wanted to go back to Vietnam, to rent a car and make one last trip between Tan Son Nhut and Tay Ninh. To be able to take one last ride up Highway 1 through Hoc Mon, Ap Cao, Cu Chi, Trang Bang, Go Dau Hau, to stop on that spot on Highway 1 that I still remember so well — to that spot where good friends, good soldiers, good men fought and died. I'd like to spend a few moments in silent reflection on all the good times, all the funny, peculiar events, all the sadness, in silent reflection of their supreme sacrifice. ☩

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BRIDEGROOMS OF DEATH

Continued from page 31

demanded loyalty to its own principles. As in its French counterpart, devotion to the organization itself replaced personal allegiance to the parent nation among foreigners. In addition, many legionnaires felt related to each other by the blood of those who had died in combat. As in other elite combat units worldwide, the death of a beloved comrade or commander gave a mystical sense of unity and a desire for further sacrifices in honor of the dead.

The chivalric code was evident in the Legion's condemnation of cowardice — or even the suspicion of it. Quixotically, the legionnaire was expected to expose himself to enemy fire in battle and to perform extraordinary feats of bravery in order to display his courage. One hard-and-fast rule was that a legionnaire never abandon a comrade on the battlefield. The Spanish Legion's call for assistance, "*A mi la legion!*," a direct translation of the French Legion's "*A moi la legion!*," saved many a legionnaire from capture and torture by the enemy, and incidentally it also helped rescue legionnaires in bar-room brawls.

With the emphasis on chivalry, it wasn't surprising that Legion officers arranged for their soldiers to have "godmothers" in Spain with whom they corresponded about battlefield feats. As in the age of medieval chivalry, legionnaires might also discuss and embellish their godmothers' virtues. In turn, the women wrote letters of encouragement and admiration, and this correspondence shows that the Legion had become a symbol among Spanish nationalists for rebirth of the country's pride through Moroccan conquests.

Though gifted as an organizer, Millan Astray had an unstable personality which led him to create another bizarre Legion cult. If death in battle was a virtue in the French Legion, in its Spanish counterpart death became an obsession. Death was revered, coveted, beloved; as a Legion song proclaimed, "We are the bridegrooms of death." Millan Astray added that when a legionnaire dies, a guardian angel takes him to heaven; death in battle, fighting for Spain, ensured him a place in paradise.

On the other hand, the pain and fear of dying were burlesqued. Before one battle, the Fifth Bandera organized a skit using an enormous skull made from material in the Legion's storehouses. Legionnaires dressed in funeral costumes and, singing mournful hymns, paraded the skull through the encampment. Millan Astray noted laconically that in the subsequent battle all but one of these soldiers died.

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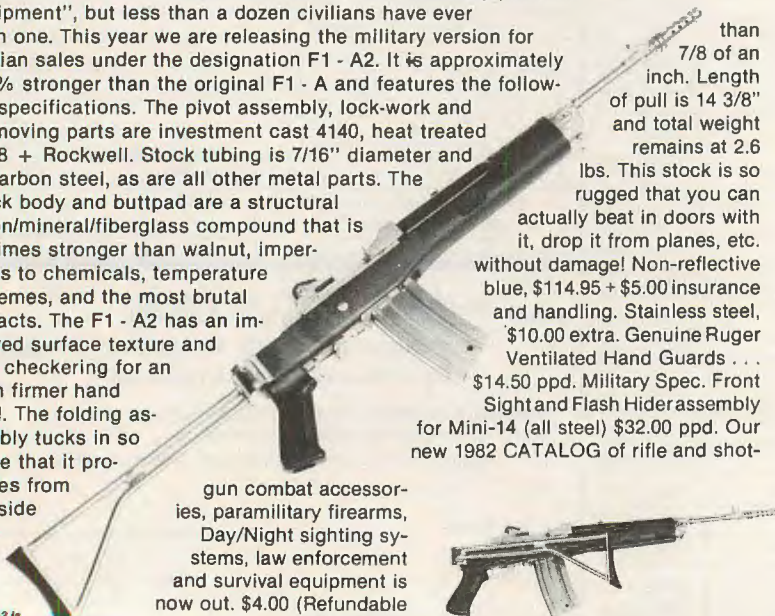
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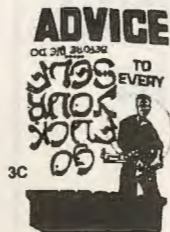
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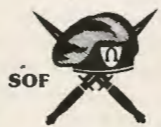
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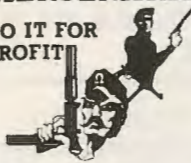
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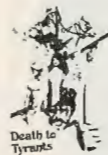
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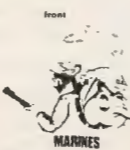
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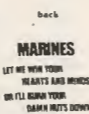
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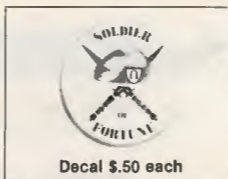
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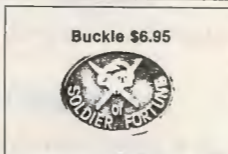
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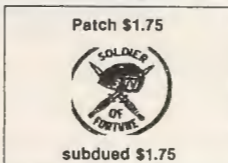
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fluous and even harmful to military efficiency, it was one of the elements which convinced legionnaires that they were a breed apart, a select few capable of winning against formidable odds. This feeling, together with the Legion's distinctive military trappings, gave the soldiers a sense of pride and a desire to justify their elite status. The spirit of sacrifice and the yearning for a heroic death certainly went beyond the mere fulfillment of duty or professional soldiering to the edge of fanaticism.

True, beliefs current in the Legion resulted in unwarranted self-destruction. Unnecessary exposure to enemy fire, as proof of courage, was a factor in numerous casualties. During the Moroccan war from September 1920 to October 1927, the Legion suffered 45-percent casualties among officers and 38 percent among enlisted men. Franco's appearance on a white horse in full view during battle demonstrated the same boldness which cost the life of many a legionnaire who lacked the uncanny luck of his chief. After numerous wounds which cost him an eye, an arm and a leg, Millan Astray personified the cult of "glorious mutilation" nurtured in the Legion. Such waste of lives could support the thesis that militarism is harmful to true military purpose — but the qualities of "caste and cult, authority and belief" also created the will to excel in combat.

Of course the Legion had rebels among its enlisted men who didn't fit in

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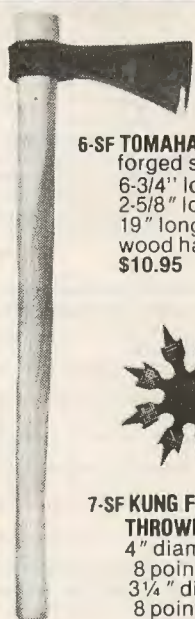
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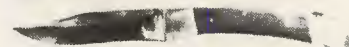
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to the organization's mold. Habitual offenders were sent to the punishment battalion or were imprisoned in tiny dark cells with dirt floors. Disobedience was sometimes punished by execution on the spot; captured deserters were first tortured and then shot. Such incidents led one disillusioned German legionnaire to complain, "The life of a legionnaire has as much value as the smile of a dog."

The brutality gave the Legion an unsavory reputation among Spanish liberals, who claimed it had revived the horrors of the Inquisition. Millan Astray justified the Legion's methods as necessary to forge a hard, disciplined organization from potentially rebellious men. Certainly the Legion's creator also had personal magnetism with which he dominated his soldiers and infused them with the organization's mystique. The man who would later scream, "Death to intelligence!" at the University of Salamanca had a certain macabre genius bordering on madness. He could inspire devotion from a motley crew of recruits and he eventually made them believe they were the creatures of his own bizarre imagination. The Spanish author and liberal, Arturo Barea, who served in the regular army's engineer corps, described a Millan Astray harangue, delivered to 800 legionnaires in a hysterical voice that alternately sobbed, shrieked and thundered:

"What are you? The bridegrooms of death! You are the gentlemen of the



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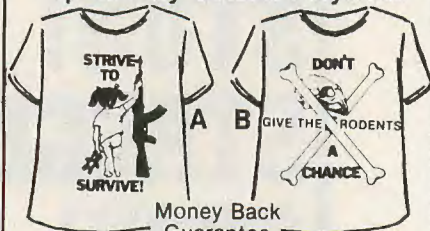
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Legion. You have washed yourselves clean for you have come here to die. There is no other life for you but in the Legion. But you must remember that you are Spanish gentlemen, all of you, knights like those other legionnaires who, conquering America, begat you. In your veins there are some of the drops of blood of Pizarro and Cortez. There are drops of the blood of those adventurers who conquered a world and who, like you, were gentlemen."

Gentlemen among themselves, perhaps, but not to the enemy — as was clearly apparent in Spain's Moroccan conflict. Legion atrocities avenged those by the enemy, but they also marked the abandonment of all scruples: More than once the Legion paraded with severed heads and ears of the enemy decorating their bayonets. Official Spanish condemnation of these practices didn't prevent their recurrence. During the Spanish civil war the Legion usually executed prisoners from the International Brigades, whose soldiers, in their turn, shot captured legionnaires, reprisals which were militarily unnecessary.

Among the regular-army soldiers in Morocco, the legionnaires' questionable practices, their elite status and their undeniable bravery in battle caused them to be regarded with mixed awe, respect and loathing. Legionnaires and other troops seldom fraternized. Legionnaires had their own taverns, drinking rituals and code of conduct in garrison towns. Legionnaires and other soldiers frequently brawled. Though a regular-army soldier might hate the legionnaires, he also felt more confident when he advanced by their side into battle.

In their encampments, the legionnaires underwent rigorous combat training in which only the fittest survived. For example, during one 36-hour forced march over Moroccan mountains, 18 legionnaires died. In addition to the conventional infantry training of the period, they were instructed in enemy tactics such as use of terrain to the best advantage and blending into the landscape for camouflage. Thanks to its training, *esprit de corps* and ruthlessness, the Legion acquired a reputation that made a psychological impact on the public. In Morocco and later during the civil war, the mere mention that the Foreign Legion was coming could demoralize the enemy and renew the spirit of the Legion's civilian adherents.

The use of the Legion in breaking Abdel Krim's siege of Melilla typified its tactical role in the Moroccan conflict. When the regular army suffered serious reverses, the Legion served as a holding or rescue force to avoid total disaster. In retreat it served as the rearguard, and in attack the vanguard. It was too small to ensure a decisive Spanish victory, but its battle record in Morocco belied its limited size, and it played a vital role in the Spanish amphibious landing at Alhucemas which signaled the end of Abdel

Krim's rebellion.

Following the Moroccan conflict, the Legion made two brief expeditions to the Spanish mainland in the early 1930s. In 1931, a *bandera* was sent from Morocco to suppress a rebellion in eastern Spain during disorders that preceded the monarchy's downfall. Three years later the Legion and Moorish regulars ruthlessly crushed an uprising by Asturian miners who were expert in dynamiting and ambushes.

During this period of the military's increasing disillusionment with the political instability and social unrest of the Second Spanish Republic, the Legion represented for its officers the most outstanding example of patriotism and dedication to the nationalist cause. Catholicism was among the traditional values they wanted to preserve against freemasonry and communism, which they regarded as destructive elements dividing the Spanish nation and attempting to demoralize the Legion itself. For officers like Juan Yague, commander of the Second Bandera in January 1936, the path was short from the Legion's ideology to the principles of Spain's fascist party, the Falange, which also offered regeneration, unity and empire, and proclaimed the virtues of obedience, discipline and sacrifice.

When the civil war broke out, the Legion had influenced the nation's political life in several important ways. Service in the Legion had brought to the fore men who figured prominently in the



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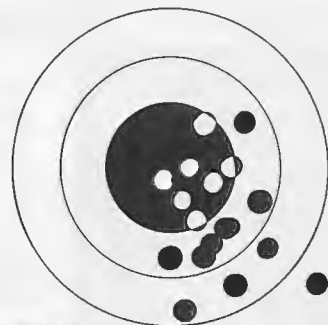
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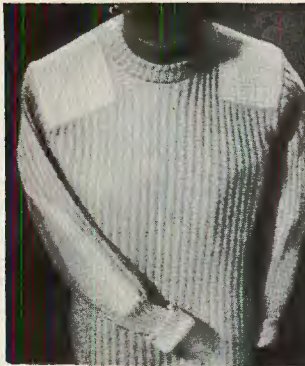


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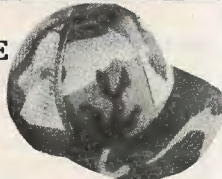
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1936 nationalist rebellion, among them Juan Yague, Jose Millan Astray and, above all, Francisco Franco, who had established his reputation in Africa as one of Spain's most gifted officers. Secondly, the use of terror and the atrocities committed by the Legion in crushing the Asturian miners' revolt became a focus for bitter controversy between Spanish liberals and conservatives. The political Right believed the Legion in Asturia saved Spain from international communism. The Left and many moderates believed the use of the Legion and Moorish troops in Asturia was an intrusion by "foreigners" on Spanish soil, and their atrocities alienated many of the Spanish electorate.

Used again in the civil war from 1936 to 1939, this "foreign" army became even more controversial. The Legion could represent the forces of evil or an army of crusaders dedicated to the Spanish nation's salvation: In Republican popular songs of the period, legionnaires are portrayed as adventurers without a fatherland, an unprincipled rabble bribed to fight in Spain against the "people's" government, and two prominent novelists of the civil war depicted legionnaires as brutalized, subhuman soldiers; in contrast, a Catholic monarchist poet, who sympathized with Franco, portrayed the Army of Africa fighting for God, its path to the Spanish peninsula opened by the Archangel Gabriel.

After the war, the Legion reverted to its former role as a colonial army, guarding Spain's remaining African possessions. These included two small enclaves, Melilla and Cueta in northern Morocco; the tiny Saharan enclave of Ifni just below Morocco on the African west coast; and the Spanish Sahara, another coastal territory of about 100,000 square miles, which was regarded as a worthless, inhospitable region with little more than "sand, flies and heat" until the mid-1950s when Spain began extensive oil exploration. This search was unsuccessful, but in 1959 the world's largest untapped phosphate deposit was discovered. Mineral exploration prompted Morocco to renew historic claims on Ifni and the Spanish Sahara; in attacks reminiscent of *Beau Geste*, Moroccan irregulars on



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With unchanging ideals and a heritage of heroic legends which each new wave of volunteers must emulate, the Legion maintains its elite mystique. The monument that commemorated the last stand at Edchara exhorted the legionnaires to match the achievements of those who once died there. Such doomed last stands suggest that victory isn't always indispensable for maintaining *esprit de corps* in military organizations. Rather it is the fulfillment of past traditions, the satisfaction of demands imposed by a creed and the organization's concept of honor: Unity and the conviction of superiority are nurtured by the mystical sense of brotherhood in a fraternity that has proven its supremacy by overcoming trials and hardships. Those who have not undergone this initiation will forever remain in the inferior status of outsiders.

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EDITORIAL

Continued from page 25

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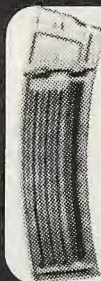
time a whole division had gone on a mechanized operation, going out to the front in 500 large trucks ... Our fighters sitting in the trucks — strong, healthy, and happy — waved their hats, waved their hands, and sang amidst the rumbling of the tanks, armored cars, trucks pulling long-range artillery and anti-aircraft guns, and all kinds of transport vehicles bumper to bumper in a long, endless line like a great waterfall rushing out to the front.

Dung's lyrical optimism reflected the real situation. The outcome was never in doubt. But the doctrines which guided the 1975 offensive owed far more to Ft. Benning than to Giap's now-discredited guerrilla-warfare theories. The North Vietnamese had profited from our long combat. (It is clear that their Soviet mentors were watching closely, too — the superb design and outfitting of the Hind attack helicopters used in Afghanistan reflect a mature consideration of the lessons learned by the U.S. Army in Vietnam.) As for the ultimate effects on the South Vietnamese, any of the numerous Vietnamese now in America will be happy to supply vivid detail.

In light of the historical record, Gen. Giap's dismissal from power is not at all surprising, particularly given the dismal circumstances of Vietnam today. Because of his former prestige, Giap's current circumstances are certainly worthy

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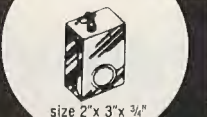
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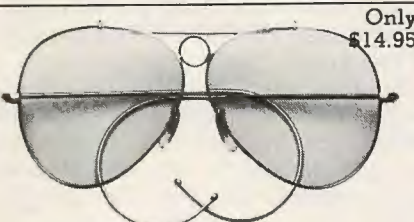
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of comment — but the comment should have some basis in fact. Giap did not engineer the defeat of anyone in Vietnam after 1954, neither American nor South Vietnamese. And as far as I (or several hundred thousand others with first-hand experience) can testify, any American "defeat" was occasioned by political rather than military actions, and took place not in Vietnam, but in Washington, D.C.

Getting the facts straight, unfortunately, is no guarantee that their implications will be pleasant. If "another Vietnam" implies a military defeat of U.S.-supported allies by communist forces, then El Salvador cannot be another Vietnam, because no such event ever took place. If the question implies concern over whether Washington will have the fortitude to resist communist aggression over an extended period, it is, sadly, a matter much in doubt. Our recent record leaves little room for optimism.

Our enemies everywhere understand their great advantage is our inconsistency of purpose. Perhaps, if we stopped telling ourselves falsehoods about our past, we could learn to regain our pride in fighting for our beliefs. In the end, our freedom, and that of others, is endangered far more by our own lack of conviction than by a thousand Giaps. If we fall, it will be by our own hand. ☒

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Continued from page 6

field and flight jackets, 18; raincoats, 5. Additionally, a wide assortment of miscellaneous equipment, ranging from canteens and mess kits to C rations, helmet liners and matches, has come in. The collection team reports that well over a ton of medical supplies has been sent in.

ASIAN DRUG WAR...

Reliable sources inside Thailand have confirmed earlier reports (see Bulletin Board, May '82) indicating forces of the Shan United Army (SUA) loyal to opium warlord Khun Sa have massed four clicks inside Burma for an offensive against hill-tribe groups which they accuse of collaborating with recent Thai Border Patrol Police (BPP) and Royal Thai Army (RTA) military actions.

Informed sources close to the border report the threat was contained in letters sent by Khun Sa to various Thai government agencies in the area, directing them not to interfere in "an internal hill-tribe affair." Khun Sa also accused the hill tribes of "serving the Americans" in the combined BPP/RTA assaults against the SUA morphine refinery and headquarters complex at Baan Hin Taek in late January of this year.

Sources also indicate the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT), on the defensive in the area, is attempting to use the dispute to provoke a local confrontation with the Thai government.

At the same time, approximately 120 of Khun Sa's troops crossed into Thailand to avoid attention of Burmese patrols recently active along the tense "Golden Triangle" border area.

On 2 April 1982, it was reported that a group of 100 armed men blocked a major north-south highway 40 clicks south of Chiang Rai in Phan Province and robbed two tour buses. The driver of a pick-up truck who attempted to run the gauntlet was killed. The 100-man ambush was armed with assorted M16s and AK-47s.

Stay tuned; SOF will be reporting on the drug-war firsthand from inside Burma.

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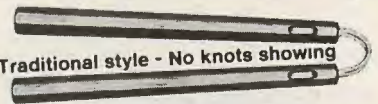


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don its policy of putting men and women together in basic training platoons. A spokesman said the new policy has already been established at Fort Jackson, S.C., and that soon it would be in effect at all basic training centers, with women being assigned to platoons at Jackson, Fort Dix, N.J. and Fort McClellan, Ala.

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The official Mexican news service, Notimex, said recently the U.S. sweep would damage the American economy because one Mexican worker is as productive as "six or seven Americans." Notimex also announced that Mexican lawmakers would demand an end to such roundups.

However, in Mexico, Xavier Ruiz, pastor of the city of San Cristobal in Chiapas State, said recently: "The Mexican government treats refugees (from Central America) like the United States treats undocumented workers. It ignores the political problem."

Mexican immigration recently expelled some 3,000 Guatemalans who had crossed the border in order to flee fighting between government troops and leftist guerrillas.

DOUBLE-TROUBLE MARINES . . .

The Reagan administration has launched a seven-year plan which would enable the Marines to fight in two wars at the same time.

Administration and Marine Corps officials told Congress recently that the leathernecks are slated to get new Harrier "jump jets," light armored vehicles, upgraded helicopters and air-cushioned hovercraft that can skim over water and land.

Navy Secretary John Lehman said the Marine Corps modernization pro-

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250 meters effective range / Barrel Length: 11 1/2 inches / Action: Semi-automatic

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- 6.25 lbs.
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gram would permit the United States to launch a Marine amphibious force of some 40,000 men with armor, air support and supplies to one theater of action and at the same time send an independent Marine amphibious force of about 16,000 troops to another battle zone.

THEY DO FORGET . . .

Vietnam has dropped six members from its ruling politburo, including the man called "The Red Napoleon," Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap, credited with defeating the French at Dien Dien Phu and the American-backed South Vietnam after the United States withdrew from Southeast Asia — although some believe the latter "victory" is better described as a media event (see Karl Phaler's editorial on p. 25).

The Vietnam News Agency said four men have been added to the Politburo, including the commander of Vietnamese forces in Cambodia and a specialist in Party organization.

L UCKY WOOD . . .

An attorney, Peter Erlinder, wishes to contact men who served with Jearl (Lucky) Wood in Vietnam from March 1969 to May 1970. Wood has had a criminal charge filed against him and the lawyer is seeking character witnesses. Wood served in Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 11th Marines, First Marine Division.

Anyone who knew him can contact the attorney by writing to him at 77 S. Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60606, or calling (312) 567-5050.

THEY WANT YOU . . .

Reader Alan M. Hoyt (1231 Bixby Ave., Ardmore, OK 73401) seeks personal stories from people who have had combat experiences with weapons firing the .45 ACP cartridge. He specifically mentions the Colt M 1911, the Thompson submachine gun and the MAC-10. He plans to publish a book from contributions and will turn over 50 percent of the proceeds from it to the SOF Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund.

If you are from Texas, Capt. W.L. Acker wants you. Capt. Acker is conducting a recruiting campaign for the Texas National Guard and can be reached at 3502 Palm Drive, Mesquite, TX 75150.

Former Marine and Vietnam vet James Marsh, 920 Driving Park Ave., Newark, NY 14513, would like to hear from anyone who knew his brother,

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Pfc. John Marsh, KIA on 6 October 1968 while serving with Golf Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Marines.

BAYONET BLUES ...

The *Infantry Journal* notes that there is an excellent bayonet training program at the Infantry School, Fort Benning, Ga., but there is one major problem — the weapons issued for bayonet fighting.

The bayonet itself is only 6½ inches long — at one time the U.S.-issue bayonet was 14 inches — and the rifle to which it is affixed, the M16A1, has been reduced to a size and construction never intended for bayonet fighting.

Since other military forces still feature stronger weapons and longer bayonets, the U.S. infantryman is put at a disadvantage.

The *Journal* notes that the M16 is so delicate that bayonet training is now done with simulated rifles in order not to damage the weapon itself. ☒

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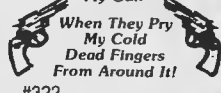


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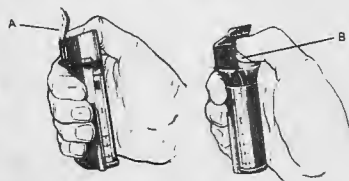
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PRE-CONVENTION COURSES

SOF will offer the following pre-convention courses in October. If you want to attend these first-class courses write for further details to:

**CONVENTION DIRECTOR,
P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306**

- **COMBAT PISTOL CRAFT** — Conducted by the internationally famous Mike Dalton, Mickey Fowler and Craig Gifford of International Shooters, Inc.
- **PRACTICAL SHOTGUN SHOOTING** — Conducted by John Satterwhite, the world scattergun master.
- **SURVIVAL MEDICINE** — Three-day comprehensive medical course covering primary injuries and field medical problems. Conducted by John Peters, M.D.

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE THIRD ANNUAL CONVENTION

12 - 17 October 1982*
Charlotte, North Carolina

Dear Fellow Adventurers,

I want to personally invite every one of our readers to our Third Annual Convention in Charlotte, N. C. The convention is being held in conjunction with the Third Annual Three Gun International Practical Shooting Match — a shotgun, pistol and assault rifle shoot to choose the top all-around combat marksman in the world; 150 expert shooters will compete, by invitation only, for \$5,000 first-prize money and over \$50,000 in cash, guns and gear. (Competitive shooters write for an application.)

The theme of this year's convention will be "SOF Salutes Project Freedom," with a very special seminar conducted concerning our POWs and MIAs still held in Southeast Asia. The Colonel "Bull" Simon Memorial Award will be presented in their interest.

We are also going to have our automatic weapons demonstration given by "Mr. Machine Gun," Peter Kokalis, plus seminars on Yellow Rain, Nicaragua and Afghanistan, and much, much more!

The 1st Airborne will conduct a Jump School beginning on Wednesday, 13 October. All interested candidates may apply.

Due to the tremendous response we received at last year's exhibition, we decided to expand our 1982 Exhibition to 400 tables. The 1982 SOF Gun Show and Exhibition will begin Thursday, 14 October, and run through Sunday, 17 October. (See reservation form on p. 88.)

Weapons demonstrations and competition shoot-offs will occur on Friday. The 1982 SOF Convention has a great line-up, and there will be more to come!

All of you who wish to attend must arrange your own accommodations. The HQ-Hotel will be the Holiday Inn — Woodlawn located at I-77 and Woodlawn in Charlotte. Reservations may be made by contacting Pam Stoltenborg at (704) 525-5007. Be sure to identify yourself as an SOF Convention delegate. Room rates are: Single — \$45.76 per day and Double — \$50.96 per day, taxes included. Rooms are also available at the Howard Johnsons — Woodlawn at \$38.48 per day Single and \$44.72 per day Double. Contact Linda Geer at (704) 525-6220. Days Inn — Woodlawn also has rooms at \$34.20 Single and \$39.40 Double — Contact Shirley Brown at (704) 527-1620. Howard Johnsons is located across the street and Days Inn is directly adjacent to the Holiday Inn, so you won't miss a thing.

(ROOM CANCELLATIONS: No refunds will be given without 72 hours notice, prior to date of arrival and by 1800 hrs.)

This will be one convention you will never forget. See you there!

DEATH TO TYRANTS,

Robert K. Brown
Editor/Publisher

* TENTATIVE CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Pre-convention courses (Combat Pistol Craft; Practical Shotgun Shooting; Survival Medicine — these courses will be held only if 20 or more students sign up) — 9-11 October.

Three-Gun Match 12-15 October
Jump School 13-15 October
Main Convention 14-16 October
Exhibition Hall 14-17 October

Look for further convention information in the next issue of SOF.

1982 SOF CONVENTION PRE-REGISTRATION FORM*

Mail To: CONVENTION DIRECTOR — P.O. Box 693 — Boulder, CO 80306

Yes, I'm coming to the 3rd Annual SOF Convention!

- Find my Certified Check, Cashiers Check or Money Order enclosed for \$100 _____
- 1st Airborne Jump School fee \$100 _____
- 1st Airborne Jump Fee (qualified jumpers only)** \$50 _____
(All Jumpers must pay \$100 convention fee)
- Competitive Shooters write for application.
- Exhibitors see form on next page.
- Extra Beer-Bust and Banquet Tickets for Non-registered Guests \$25 each _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

*Pre-registration ends 15 September; after that the fee is \$125.00.

**A qualified parachutist is defined as any person with a current Jump Log Book showing a jump within the past 90 days. 1st Airborne reserves the right to deny anyone access to their program.

(See other side to complete form)

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Please reserve _____ tables at \$75.00 each

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A man in a dark police uniform is shown in profile, looking towards the left. He is holding a handgun in his right hand. The uniform has several patches: a name tag that says "Brown", a "WV" patch, a "S&A" patch, and a police badge. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a vehicle with "POLICE" written on it.

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

- **SOF SALUTES PROJECT FREEDOM—POW/MIA** Action Update with special report by SOF Editor/Publisher Lt. Col. Robert K. Brown.
- **SOF 3-GUN INTERNATIONAL PRACTICAL SHOOTING MATCH** to determine the world's best combat shooter.
- **CHARLOTTE CIVIC CENTER** — 400-Table Gun, Militaria, Police, Survival and Knife Show.
- **CLOSE AIR SUPPORT IN VIETNAM** by Lt. Col. Mark Berent.
- **POLICE SEMINARS** by Officers Evan Marshall, John Farnam and Ken Pence.
- **THE SOVIETS IN AFGHANISTAN** and Soviet Armor by David Isby.
- **CENTRAL AMERICA UPDATE** by Alta Mirano and Bob Caldwell.
- **VIETNAM VETS: Who represents who** by Al Santoli.
- **YELLOW RAIN** — an SOF exclusive on the communist use of poisonous gas.
- **SOG (Special Operations Group) 2nd Annual Seminar** on cross-border operations in Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam 1958-1973.
- **MAN AGAINST TANK** — An SOF special seminar by Captain Larry Dring on the ways and means to smash Soviet armor.
- **WALL OF STEEL & FLAME FIRE POWER DEMONSTRATION** by "Machine Gun" Pete Kokalis & "Dynamite" John Donovan.
- **BEER BUST AND AWARDS BANQUET.**

LISTEN

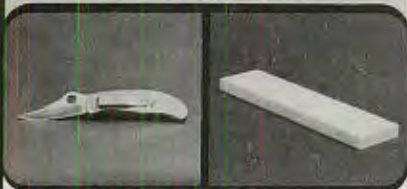
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FLAK

Continued from page 8

Regardless of this incident, I believe that you are doing your readers an injustice, as well as denying many talented contributors an audience that could do nothing but appreciate what they write.

Sincerely,
Richard Alan Sayger
Tucson, Arizona

The most bizarre stories known dwell in the minds of men, but they never happened. We would be doing our readers a disservice by telling them anything less than the truth. Fictional writing can be found in other action-adventure magazines but not ours. After all, the truth is stranger, and more interesting, than fiction. — The Eds.

THANKS A LOT, JANE ...

Sirs:

Read and enjoyed Tiziano Terzani's article, "Vietnam in Trouble; Jane Fonda's Black Comedy" (SOF, June '82). She should never be able to live down what she did to our men and our country. I'd like to have a bumper sticker: "Look at Vietnam Now, Jane Fonda!" I am astounded that she plays all-American parts in major motion pictures.

I'm married to an ex-Special Forces man, and we both feel that we should send her to Hanoi and leave her there.

Thank you, SOF,
Mrs. Robert Goode
Seattle, Washington

Fantastic idea. — The Eds.

CHRISTIAN MARXISM? ...

Sirs:

Accolades are due to SOF for its short but astute appraisal of the Catholic missionary Jesuits and Maryknollers who are supporting the communists in volatile Latin America (Bulletin Board, "Has God Changed Sides?" SOF, April, '82). As a philosophy major at a Jesuit university, I have been intimately exposed to the theory of "liberation theology." It is laden with Marxist cliches. Although quick to distort and sensationalize alleged "human rights" violations of the Duarte junta to an eager American media, these "missionaries" (zealous political agitators would be a more appropriate term) are strangely silent about the brutalities

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October, 1979, p. 52

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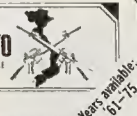
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perpetuated by the Cuban and Soviet-backed guerrillas in El Salvador.

Conservative columnist William F. Buckley, Jr., labeled "Christian Marxism" a concept as ludicrous and contradictory as "Jewish Nazism." Yet many Americans remain naive and trusting (i.e., financially vulnerable) of the Maryknoll and Jesuit missionaries, unaware of their support of atheistic communists.

The mass media seem to be Castro's most valuable ally in America. Let's hope SOF's coverage will be contagious.

Edward Rutyna
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts



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We enjoy SOF very much.

We also agree with you on the Vietnam War Memorial.

Sincerely,
Estelle Winn
Hendersonville, North Carolina

IT'S JIHAD IN AFGHANISTAN ...

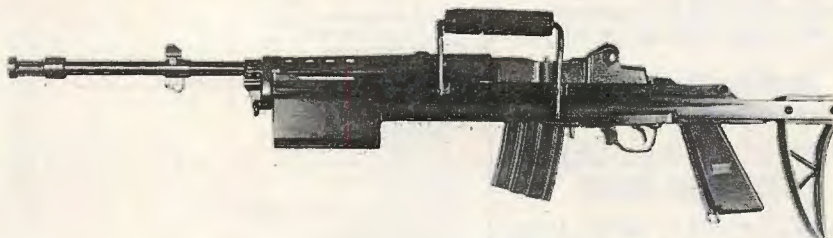
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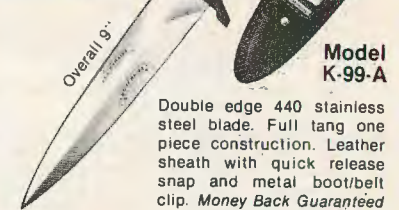
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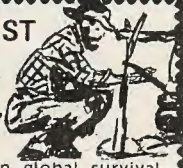


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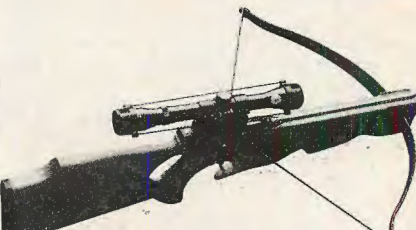


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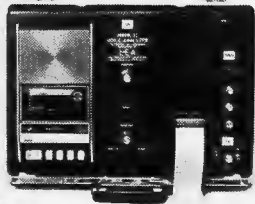
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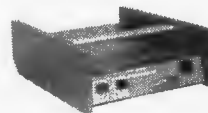
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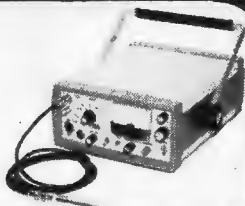


LETTERBOMB DETECTOR

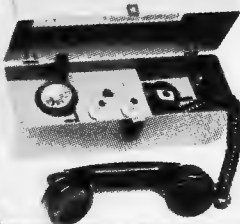
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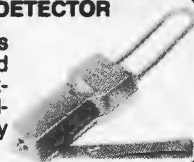
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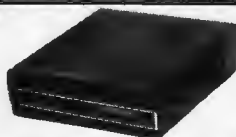
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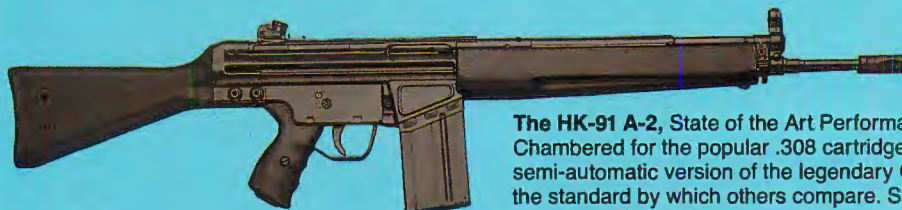
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